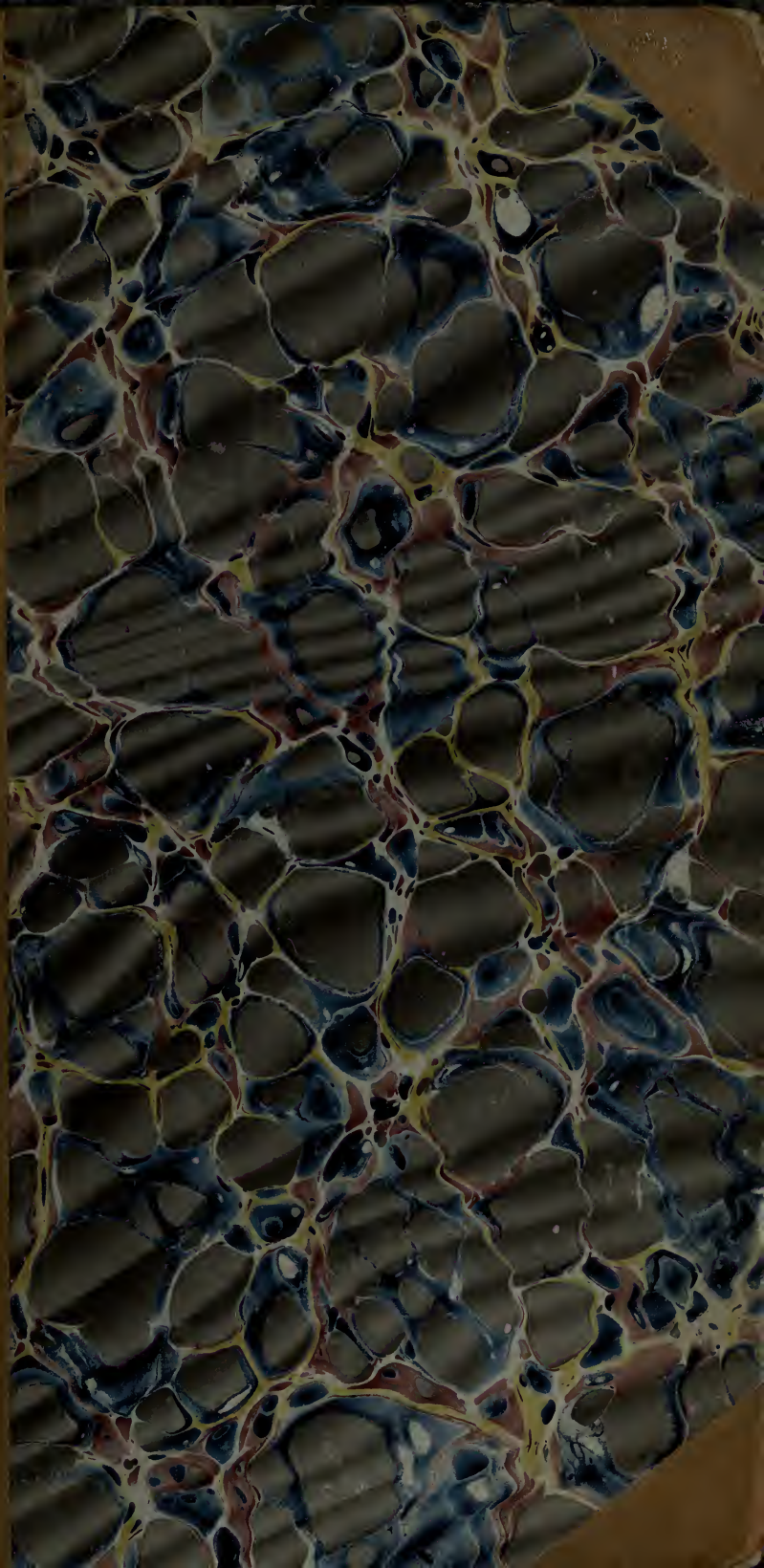
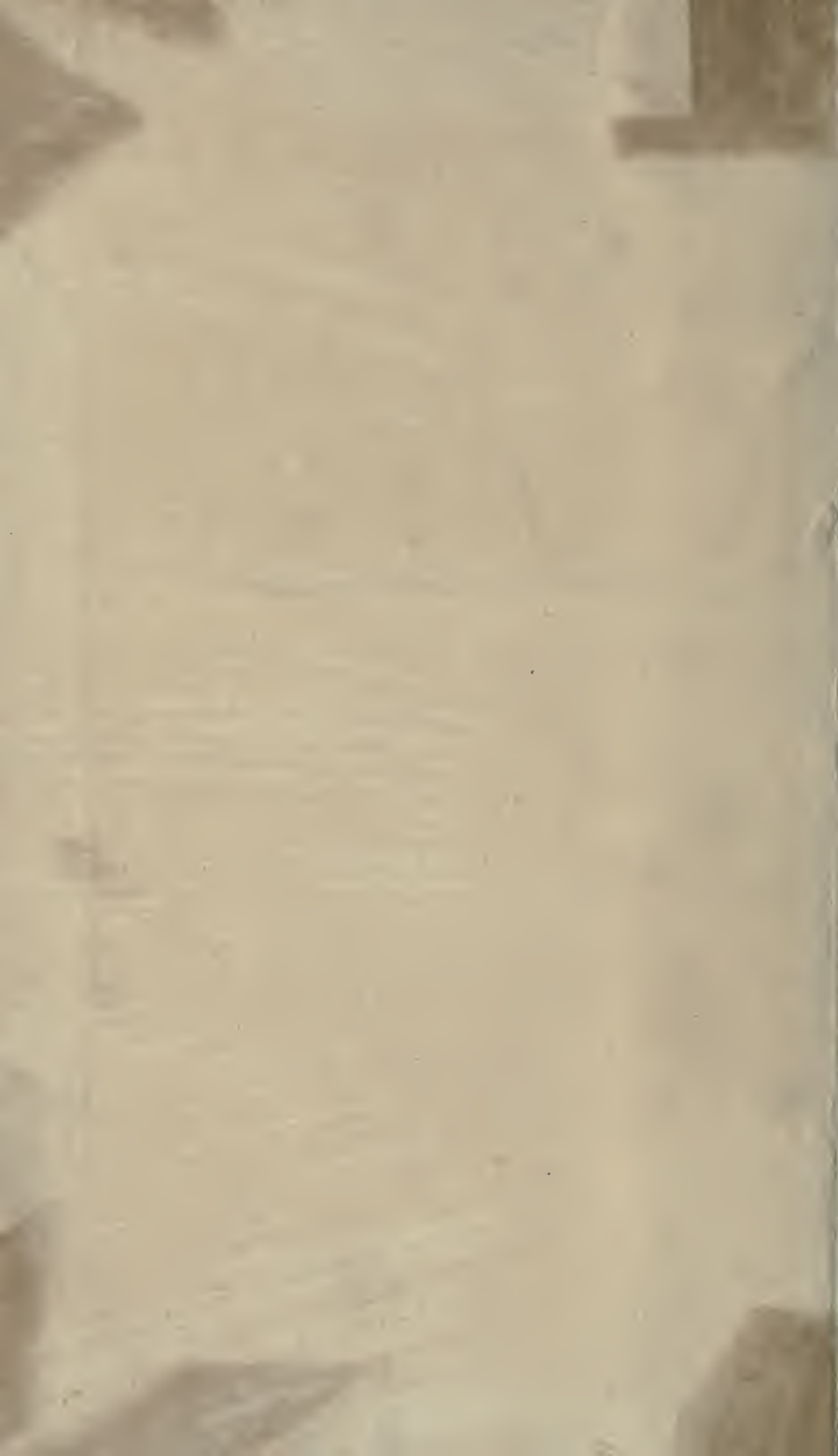
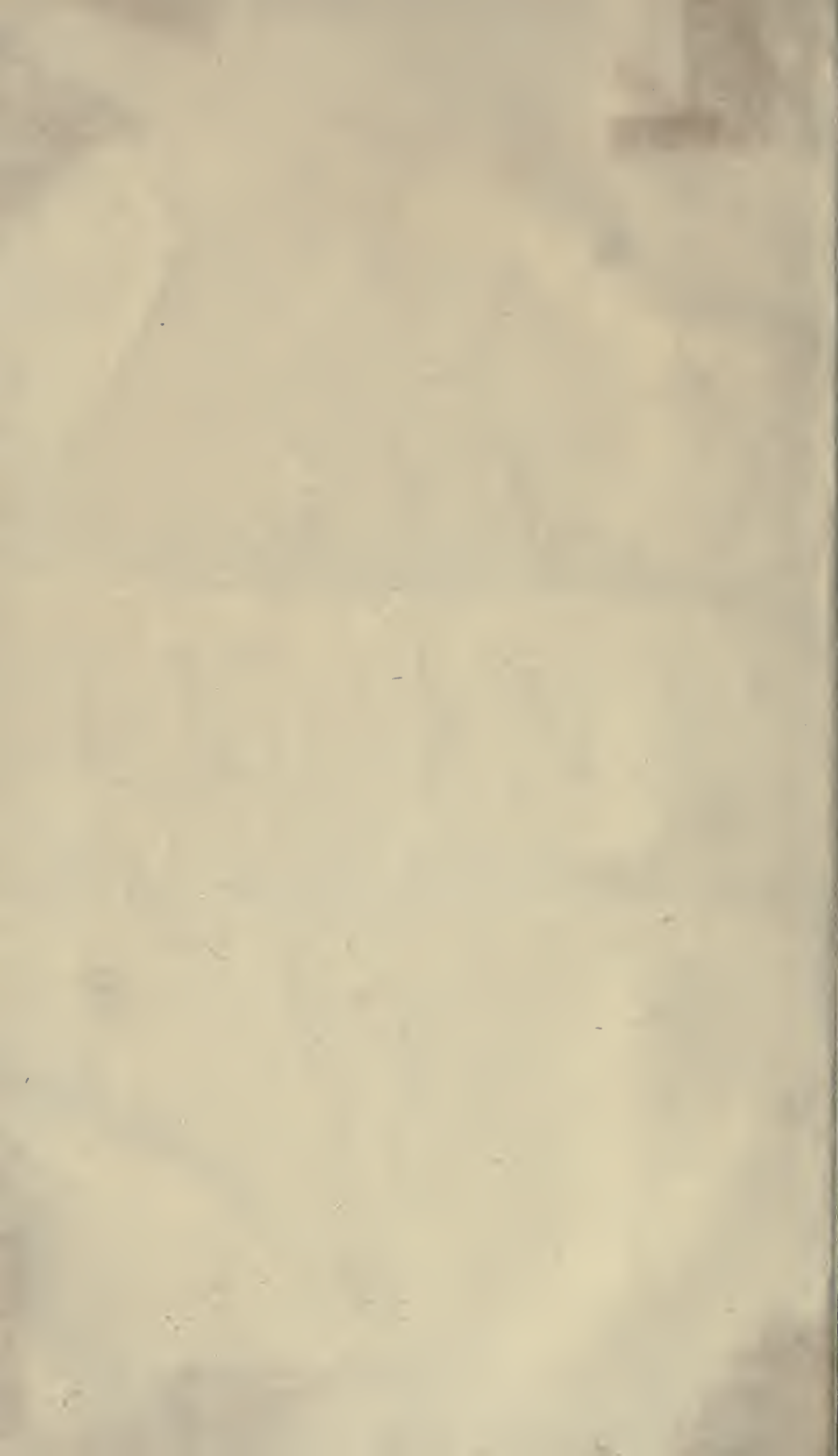




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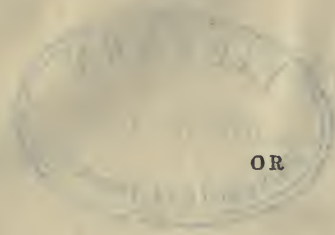




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LIFE IN THE NEW WORLD;



OR

SKETCHES OF AMERICAN SOCIETY.

BY SEATSFIELD.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

GUSTAVUS C. HEBBE, L.L.D. AND JAMES MACKAY, M.A.

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DEDICATION.

To the German Nation,

ROUSED TO THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF ITS POWER AND DIGNITY,

THESE

PICTURES OF THE DOMESTIC AND PUBLIC LIFE

OF THE

Free Citizens of a Free State,

DESTINED TO HISTORICAL GREATNESS,

ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

AS A

MIRROR FOR SELF-EXAMINATION,

BY

THE AUTHOR

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PART FIRST

THE

COURTSHIP OF GEORGE HOWARD, ESQUIRE.

CHAPTER I.

SEVENTEEN, TWENTY-EIGHT AND FIFTY; OR,
SCENES IN NEW-YORK.

"Sissy! sissy!" cried the voice of a nightingale, and a little angel's head had scarce peeped through the door, when her entire self danced into the room, making a ludicrous courtesy, bowing obsequiously, and exclaiming: "No; this is not to be endured! Pa raves—runs past me into the street, as if 'Change were on fire. Ma yawns—will hear nothing of shopping—and growls continually, 'cash! cash! cash!' Oh! my dear sissy! our shopping excursion will be ruined to-day."

Sissy, to whom this tirade was addressed, sat resting her left hand upon the sofa, and holding "Paul Clifford" in her right. She cast a languid, sorrowful look upon her lovely sister.

"Alas! poor Stanton will be distressed enough," she continued. "Look, he is just making his tenth promenade toward the Battery. Yesterday he was a most sorrowful object. I could not have had the heart to refuse him. How could you be so cruel, dear Margaret?"

"Alas!" whispered Margaret, ruefully, "how could I do otherwise? Was not Ma behind me, thrusting her parasol, anyway but gently, into my back? I declare, Ma sometimes is really vulgar." And a deep sigh escaped her.

"Yes," continued the sister; "I don't know what she has against poor Stanton; but to speak the truth, our gallopade has

lost nothing through his absence. In the first one he danced, he was as awkward as a man of straw. Our Louisiana backwoodsman showed himself to much greater advantage."

At these words the little cherry-lipped creature looked at me with such a wicked smile, that, in spite of the equivocal compliment, I could not be angry.

"That is ignoble, Arthurine," exclaimed the excited Margaret.

"Sissy! sissy!" cried her sister, deprecating Margaret's resentment—running up to her, and entwining her alabaster arms around her neck, coaxing and soothing her so affectionately, that Margaret, with tearful eyes, embraced her.

To see this girl, as she flew about like ether, her tiny foot scarce touching the rich carpet, you would have sworn she was an airy phantom. She was a perfect beauty. Slender as a reed, and scarcely stronger, ten fingers could encircle her; and every limb trembled like quicksilver. Hands and feet of the most fairy-like proportions; a face, gentle as the breath of roses and lilies; her eyes, bright, blue, round, and clear, full of pure lustre! Who could help being enchanted?

"Alas! alas!" sighed Margaret, riper only by two short years: "No; this vulgar world, so rough and selfish, shall not interfere between me and my noble Stanton! It would break my heart!"

"Well, sissy, I really do not know," replied Arthurine; "Moreland, you know, weighs fully five hundred thousand dollars,

and, compared with him, Stanton is light as a feather, scarce two thousand per annum."

"Love despises filthy lucre," whispered Margaret.

"Nonsense!" replied Arthurine; "I go for wealth, if it is only on hand in sufficient quantity. Just think of the parties, the balls! Every summer to Saratoga, perhaps to London and Paris! Victorine has quite excited my curiosity, by talking so much of Queen Adelaide."

"Away, away with him!" cried Margaret.

"He is not yet here, and he only comes to tea; we have still six full hours before tea-time," replied Arthurine with christian resignation.

"Ah! how cruel!" said Margaret, "for the sake of miserable money, to refuse us this little pleasure!"

"Yes, if we only had a few dozen good new novels," rejoined Arthurine. "I cannot comprehend why Cooper is so lazy. Not more than one novel in a whole year! I think I could *play* one every day. How would it be, sissy, if you began to write? I believe you could do it as well as Mrs. Mitchell. Bulwer is an unbearable, fantastical fellow; and Walter Scott begins now-a-days to be old and worn out."

"Ah, Howard!" sighed Margaret.

"Patience, my dear Margaret!" I replied. "If it is possible, I will assist you in pacifying the old man. At least we will try."

Rap—tap—tap!—went the the knocker of the street door. Arthurine listened. Again two knocks. Her eyes brightened with joy.

"A visit," she cried triumphantly, and ran to the door. "Ah, these are ladies' steps!"

The door opened, and the Misses Pearce entered the splendid drawing-room, rustling, and fragrant, in violet-colored, open pelisses, embroidered robes, and prunellas. They looked as if they were going to a ball.

Whoever has the good fortune to see our girls of the so-called *haut-ton* in their morning dress—I say, has the *good fortune* to see them; for we have become rather exclusive—his heart must be formed of granite and quartz, if it can resist so much enchantment. These light, gentle beings, with their soft, intelligent features, their bright, liquid eyes, their delicate figures, which you are tempted to encircle to prevent their being blown away by the wind, and their dainty hands and feet, are positively irresistible. The Boston girls are more intellectual, and their features are

more regular, but they have something Yankee-like, which does not suit me; moreover, in their figure, I always miss a most important part, the bosom. It is the well-known fashion of the Yankee metropolis to have none. Besides, they are such confounded bluestockings. The Philadelphians are more round and elastic. Among them, you find excellent figures, and they chat so pleasantly;—they cannot be excelled in small-talk; but the New-Yorkers, particularly after the appearance of a "Red Rover," or "Last of the Mohicans," are incomparable Coras and Alices—natural as life. Cooper, I will bet, if he only saw them, would tear his manuscripts and make his ladies not quite so wooden. He can have enjoyed their acquaintance only in Broadway or on the Battery, where they are so much lost in buckram, that the real woman cannot be distinguished. Indeed, the two Misses just entering, are living illustrations of this style of dress. They have loaded themselves at once with the four daily metamorphoses of a fashionable Englishwoman, or Frenchwoman. But my tête-à-tête for to-day is over. I am now superfluous, and the two fair beings are provided against ennui. Accordingly I must take leave.

As I passed the parlor, the door opened, and Mamma Bowsends beckoned me in. Papa was also present.

"You leave us early to-day, my dear Howard," began the first.

"The ladies have visitors."

"Ah, my dear Howard!" sighed mamma.

"The workies have carried the election!" grumbled papa.

"That awful Stanton," interrupted her better half. "Just imagine——"

"The cunning Jew,"* continued Mr. Bowsends, "his particular friend has played him an excellent trick. Ha, ha! every day he was before the church. Ha, ha! it was too funny. Did you hear nothing of it, Mr. Howard?"

I hardly knew to which of the parties I should listen first, for the old couple spoke simultaneously.

"I don't know," sighed the lady, "but I dislike that Mr. Stanton more and more every day. Just think; he has the effrontery not to abandon all thoughts of Margaret! He, worth scarcely two thousand per annum!"

"He is said to be making preparations for leaving the Hermitage; bank stocks have fallen a half per cent.," again interrupted the husband.

*Cunning Jew—a certain distinguished New-York politician, of that creed will be recognized.

"Astonishing!" I cried, my ejaculation suiting both poor Stanton and the new President.

"He should consider what *he* is, and what *we* are," rejoined the lady, pompously.

"Certainly, certainly!" I replied.

"And the election for Governor goes wrong also!" Mr. Bowsends exclaimed.

"And then Margaret—just imagine her blindness! She certainly is a kind, good creature—but five hundred thousand dollars!" continued the lady.

"Are not to be slighted," was my opinion. The five hundred thousand dollars had finally touched a corresponding chord, in the heart of the old man. "Five hundred thousand dollars! certainly," he rejoined. "Who could hesitate? All folly; these girls would ruin a Cæsar."

"Yes, with your elections and the works," grumbled Mrs. Bowsends.

"You understand nothing of that," he replied warmly. "The interests of Congress—of the country—must be sustained. How would it be done if we——"

"Did not bet," I thought.

"We will soon be unable to get a window-frame put in without special license; these congressmen already grow so much above us. And this Miss Fanny Wright——"

The lady uttered a cry of horror; but she again became calm, and said:

"No, you are our old family friend, and I hope you will——"

"Apropos," interrupted her loving spouse. "How did your cotton crop turn out? You can consign to me. How many bales?"

"A hundred, and a few dozen hogsheads of tobacco."

"At all events, six thousand per annum," grumbled papa. "Hem, hem."

"For that matter, I have funds on hand," I continued carefully, "to double the hundred bales."

"Two hundred! two hundred!" the man's eyes glistened with approbation. "That will do; that's not bad. Yes, Arthurine is a dear girl! Well, my dear Mr. Howard, we'll see. Well, well! you come every evening—no ceremony—you know Arthurine is glad to see you."

"And Mr. and Mrs. Bowsends?" I asked.

"Have no objections," said both, smiling.

Pleasantly surprised, I bowed and left. Certainly a few of the latter phrases did not sound very agreeably to my ears. My kind, amiable father-in-law seems anxious to pay his lost bets with my cotton. There must be something in the way. I could barely restrain myself from exclaiming: "Dis-

gusting people!—so horribly selfish that they would not let each other speak. The most stupid impudence that ever disgraced vulgar sounds, without a thought of anything but their own spongy, sapless, rotten selves! Even their children are to them only things, chattels! and these people belong to the *haut-ton*! Twenty-five years ago, that man used to take a measure. Now he is spokesman on 'change and a member of twenty committees. And Arthurine! she seventeen, and I eight-and-twenty;—the most expensive girl in the city, and that certainly, is not saying a little; but also the most elegant, fascinating, and perfect sylph! Could anything be more delicate than her complexion? Her whole figure, too, is enchanting! It is eleven months since I became acquainted, attracted, and enamored, as if I were bound by Armida's fetters. She had just returned to her father's house from the French boarding-school at St. John's. Now, to make a passing remark, this is the manner and fashion in which our mushroom aristocracy is formed. A couple of daughters are sent to a fashionable school. On their return home, they attract with their companions, a few dozen young coxcombs, and the daughter's glory naturally reflects on the good papa and the dear mamma. Jove! this little witch knows how to attract. All hearts panted for conquest; but none could boast of being richer, even by a glance, than his twenty fellow-suitors. I was the only one who could rejoice somewhat over certain passive favors,—such as permission to accompany her on foot, on horseback, and in the carriage,—to carry her shawl, and put it on her shoulders, to be her constant dancing partner, when there was no better, and to perform other such amiable offices. She joked, played, and fluttered around me, hung upon my arm and tripped with me up Broadway, or down by the Battery. I also undertook to provide her with the latest productions of Walter Scott, Cooper, Bulwer, etc.,—to surprise her with our Atlantic Souvenirs, Tokens, and also with the English Keepsakes and Amulets, as well as the fashionable bravura airs, of the favorite Madame Vestris.

All this had cost me a heavy sum; yet I thought that it came into the hands of the prettiest girl in New-York, consoled me—some time she must surrender! Fortune really had favored me twice: once, as we stood upon Niagara bridge, and looked down into the roaring cataract, she allowed me to put my arm round her waist, to keep her from giddiness, and I almost fell into the stream thereby; again,

the same enterprise succeeded at the Trenton Falls. But that was all my real enjoyment during eleven months I lost in New-York. Southerners here are looked upon somewhat like bullfinches and robins, who just arrive in plump condition for the benefit of eligible northern ladies, by whom, without much trouble, we are caught, of course—that is, if we have the necessary dollars. It is the fashion to be served at our tea-table by a northern beauty—the only service they generally will perform after marriage. Already I had come up for the sixth time on this important business. It was high time to close, if I would not be speedily turned out of the market as an uncurrent commodity.

As I was wending my way, absorbed in thought, past Trinity church into Wall-street, I met Stanton, my partner in misfortune. The sorrowful countenance of the poor Yankee, almost made me laugh outright. This is an augur, I thought, as he came up to inform me that “the weather is fine,” and to offer me a mouthful of his chewing tobacco. It really appeared inexplicably strange, I said, that the æsthetic, delicate Margaret would endure such a thing.

“Yes,” he replied, after ruminating for a moment; “Moreland chews also.”

“Yes; but he has five hundred thousand dollars, and they sweeten the poison.”

“Alas!” he sighed.

“Don’t lose courage,” I said to him; “Bowsends is rich.”

The man shook his head. “Two hundred thousand, it is said; but to-morrow, perhaps, he will not be worth twenty. You know our New-Yorkers. The show is great; but if he gets his daughters off his hands, he will certainly fail within a week.”

“To come out the more gloriously next year,” was my consolation.

“Yes, that *might* be so,” said the Yankee.

“Well, well,” I replied, laughing, “with an easy conscience like yours, you will not want. Meanwhile, do you take the languishing Margaret, and share the enviable lot of your fellow-citizens: go of a morning to the Washington market, with a tin box or a white basket, and bring home potatoes and salt mackerel for the table of your slumbering wife—a favor which she will condescend to acknowledge by pouring out a cup of bohea for you, with her own fairy hand. This will be an excellent antidote against dyspepsy.”

“You are malicious,” said poor Stanton.

“And you are foolish. A hundred houses are open to a young lawyer like yourself.”

“And to you, also.”

“Yes; you are right.”

“And I have the advantage, that the girl loves me.”

“Pa, ma, and the girl, all love me.”

“Have you five hundred thousand dollars?”

“No!”

“Poor Howard!” he exclaimed.

“Go to the devil!” I added, laughing.

We had thus talked away a pleasant quarter of an hour, when a coach came up from Greenwich-street, containing a person whom I thought I recognized. One of the Philadelphia steamers had just arrived. I walked on.

“Stop!” cried the new-comer.

“Stop!” I repeated, hurrying to the coach.

It was Richards, the friend of my youth, at school and at college; and, moreover, my neighbor, born within twenty, and residing within a hundred and seventy miles of me.

I took my leave of poor Stanton, entered the coach, and we rolled up Broadway toward the American Hotel.

“But for Heaven’s sake, George!” said my friend, when we were seated in his room, “what are you doing here? Have you forgotten your friends, your house, plantation, and all? You have been away these eleven months.”

“I have been courting, my dear fellow—courting, without being a whit nearer the mark than I was the first day!” I replied.

“It is true, then, that you are caught at Bowsends? Poor boy! What would you do with this doll, who has not even the patience to read a novel of Cooper through—who, in her twelfth year, knew Tom Moore and Byron, excepting perhaps Don Juan, by heart—who has studied geography and the globes, astronomy and Cuvier, and the Cartoons of Raphael; but, on my life, does not know whether a veal-cutlet comes from beef or pork—who would boil tea like cabbage, and pickle eggs in German crout!”

“And who falls into convulsions at the sight of a needle; but that is in the blood,” I added. “Yet the boiling and pickling she may let alone.”

“Who does not know,” he continued, “whether clothes in washing have to be boiled or roasted.”

“And who sings like an angel, provided she has not a cold, plays like Orpheus, and dances like a sylph.”

“You will grow fat on that,” he replied.

“I know the family; father and mother are the most miserable——”

"Stop!" I cried, "they are not a particle better or worse than the rest."

"No; there you are right."

"Well then! At six o'clock, I have promised to come to tea. Will you go? I'll introduce you."

"I know them—I know them. I go on condition that within three days you leave New-York with me."

"If I don't marry," I added.

"Bah!" was the reply.

I must confess, that the satire of my friend, and even my own had startled me somewhat, yet not much. But then, who in this mad New-York, this merry American Paris, could come to sober thoughts—here, where it certainly does not, as in trans-Atlantic cities, rain wine from fountains and sausages from trees for the people one day, and cartridges' from muskets the next; but where one can live just as merrily and pleasantly, with the only difference that the New-Yorkers look up to wealth a little more fawningly.

This, in fact, is our great political arcumum, the most certain preventive against showers, either of wine or cartridges. *Probatum est.* Yes, they are a sanguine pushing people, these New-Yorkers, who live and let live, acquire gold by the peck, and spend by the bushel. They will not let a man come to himself. Even the calculating Yankeeism of Boston, and the Quakerism of Philadelphia, change here, and one would think that whole continents lay between the flat, plain, quiet quaker city—where watchmen have to wear sheepskin soles to their shoes, lest they should disturb the slumbers of the dear citizens, and their still dearer wives—and merry bustling, noisy New-York. During the last eight days it has been lively beyond all measure. Presidential, gubernatorial, and municipal elections have put the three hundred thousand souls, of which the high and low world is composed, into such a commotion, that it has been impossible to obtain a coat or inexpressibles, honorable tradesmen being too much occupied with the common welfare.

My shoemaker looked at me the other day, with so much importance, that I almost supposed he also had an eye to the twenty-five thousand dollars; and certainly the good fellow had gained something; he had been chosen to assist in guiding the rudder of State at Albany. Even his shamefully neglected art had to contribute to increase the splendor of the political drama, and all the head-quarters of the victorious and conquered parties, were hung round with immense transparencies,

in which the Victor of New-Orleans, with his war-steed, was represented at one time like a Goliath—at another, like Cincinnatus following his plough. Adams-men, on their side, however, did not neglect to furnish counterpieces in real Nuremberg fashion, representing Old Hickory with daggers and pistols, dispatching a few dozen free citizens to the next world.

A lively "Hurrah for Jackson!" sounding up Murray-street, indicates something new. The scene is, indeed, unique. Some forty hack-drivers are marching in procession toward the Park, with the most extraordinary cavalcade flanking them that mortal ever looked upon. Sunburnt, brawny men ride two or three at a time upon the same horse, climbing up and tumbling off alternately. Every fall of the awkward cavaliers is accompanied by a loud huzzah from the multitude, that makes the windows rattle. All possible styles of dress distinguish these mounted tars—pitch-black hats, caps, jackets, and trowsers. One is dressed in a fashionable frock; another in a "Tom-and-Jerry," which has just found its way from Chatham-street to his back; a third shines in a roundabout of fiery red: altogether, the the most crazy, variegated mass that ever was congregated. They are the crew of the frigate Constitution, who have been called in and paid off this morning, laboring with all their might to relieve themselves of the five or six hundred dollars which each of them has accumulated during the three years' cruise. A stranger observing this merry mass passing along, amid noise, yelling, and shouting, each with a fair damsel by his side, and bawling as if he would burst his lungs, must form rather a queer opinion of our city police. But this does no harm. These are men who certainly have never read Julius Cæsar or Cornelius Nepos; but their hearts beat quite as warmly for their country as if they had been familiar with the heroes of Plutarch. Show them a British frigate, and they will treat it as true freemen will always treat the pride of dull and servile mercenaries. Let the storm burst upon them, and they will stand like rocks amid the roar of the tempest, hanging, perhaps, to the frozen sail, their hands and feet clinging, benumbed, to the cable; and if, amid the breaking timbers and the waves rushing in, they sink in the bottomless abyss, their last thought will be of their country's glory. Such men deserve to enjoy themselves in their own way. They will again become sober, without police, gens-d'armes, or watch-house. Their

rough, unrestrained amusement is not half so dangerous to public morals as your refined *bon ton*. In three days, a third of these four hundred and fifty men will not have a single copper left; in six, the second third; and, in ten days, *all* will be pretty well "cleaned out." Embarked once more in their red jackets, on voyages to every part of the earth, excepting, perhaps, a few who seek their own firesides, or find themselves detained by circumstances.

After joining a few times in these follies, they grow wiser, get married, and settle down as good family fathers. At first they act a little strangely, and as seamen are apt to do; but their sound sense gradually teaches them to comprehend their new position. These men are characterized by a merry, free and independent spirit, together with strong and daring valor, which animating the whole nation, has produced excellent fruits, as the world must have seen during the last war, on the defeat of our enemy. These men have learned to deal with New Zealanders, Chinese, Turks, and Frenchmen, and to look proudly down upon them all, since they have beaten the mistress of the sea. The British sailor returns home to his yoke more stupid than when he went away: the American, ever more enlightened for servitude, compels the mind to retrograde, while liberty urges it forward. The one knows that knowledge is dangerous, or superfluous, as regards the end of his course—Greenwich Hospital; the other knows that he must acquire it, that he may enter honorably and profitably upon the active life of a free citizen.

And John Bull, in his stupidity, is astonished that with our five frigates we should have taken ten of his, and driven him from our seas in two principal battles? He, who sends away his poor sailors with fifteen shillings, and, if they forget themselves a moment, sends them for two or three months into a black hole! We have many faults and are far from being angels,—but we have one virtue, which covers a multitude of sins: we respect the dignity of man and the rights of citizens; and this has won for us, from the greatest tyrant, the highest earthly boon man ever sought for,—Liberty, in our country and upon our seas.

It was six o'clock, when, with Richards I entered the drawing-room of my future mother-in-law. The good lady almost frightened me, in her new gauze turban, which had just arrived by the Henry IV. It made her look like one of our Mississippi owls. Richards also was perceptibly fright-

ened, and the good Moreland stared at the wonderful head-dress, as if it were the dial of a clock. Margaret in a green silk dress, her hair smoothly combed down on both sides of her forehead *à la Margarette*—we have our own phraseology of fashion—looked pale and resigned, like Jephtha's daughter. A slight tremor was perceptible in her elegant figure, and it was easy to see that she mourned languishingly for her absent swain, and no wonder indeed. What a difference between Moreland, a man of fifty with a red face, who sat there cold, tough, and broad; and the light, dashing Stanton, who lived on oysters and raisins, and, at worst, became intoxicated on one of Bulwer's novels. I had brought the "Tales of a Grandfather" for the delicate Margaret.

"Walter Scott!" she exclaimed with a gentle, melting voice. "Ah! this vulgar man has not a word to say," she whispered after a while.

"Just wait," I replied. "Such affairs, you know, are generally awkward at first—fear and modesty account for silence."

The girl looked at me. She was quite angry. "Cold, heartless scoffer!" she said. Yet what could I have said otherwise? she was so ridiculously sensitive.

Richards had meanwhile commenced a conversation with Bowsends. The poor fellow, who did not know that his host was an Adams-man, and had lost five thousand dollars in bets and in attempts to change the opinions of the sovereign people, had informed him that "Old Hickory" was about to leave the Hermitage.

"The bloodthirsty backwoodsman, half-horse and half-alligator," interrupted Mr. Bowsends.

"Costs you a good deal of money," added Moreland, smiling.

"And smokes a pipe, like these vulgar Germans," remarked Mrs. Bowsends.

"Well, I could not call that vulgar, for the tobacco has quite a different taste," said the unfortunate Moreland.

I nudged him with my elbow.

"Do *you* smoke a pipe, Mr. Moreland?" asked Margaret.

The man looked up. This unexpected question confused him; his conscience, however, would not allow him to prevaricate, and he replied:

"It tastes *so good!*"

I had anticipated the emotions of this gentle soul, and leaned my arm across the chair just as Arthuline entered. She looked round a moment; but it was too late to withdraw. She seemed not to observe it; nodded merrily to the company, then ran

up to Moreland, bid him good evening, inquired about his bets, his ships, his old Tom, and, in short, talked for ten minutes in one breath. Ere Moreland was well aware, his hand was in both of hers. They certainly had been old acquaintances, however; and he might be her grandfather.

Margaret, meanwhile, had recovered from her fright.

"He smokes a pipe," she whispered to Arthurine, in tones of inconsolable grief.

"Old Hickory is very popular in Pennsylvania," began Richards again, without dreaming of the mischief he had already done; "a farmer of Bedford county has just presented him with a barrel of Monongahela."

"That I envy him," exclaimed Moreland. "A glass of old Monongahela is worth its weight in gold."

This last blow was too much; the delicate nerves of Margaret could bear it no longer; she sank. Luckily I caught her. Tea had just been announced. With the assistance of the servant and the maid, she tottered from the room.

"Have you brought her a book?" asked Arthurine.

"Yes, a new novel by Walter Scott."

"Oh! then she will recover," said the sister, indifferently.

The nervous beauty once gone, we were silent no longer. Captain Moreland was a merry tar, who had made ten voyages to China, fifteen to Constantinople, twenty to St. Petersburg, and nobody could say how many to Liverpool. He had, moreover, acquired a considerable fortune, which he managed prudently. He was a jovial man of the world, with sound judgment, excepting on one point—the women, of whom he knew about as much as the man in the moon. The attentions of Arthurine, her maidenly modesty, and her lovely charms appeared decidedly to please the old bachelor. There was something so good-humored, so witty, and at the same time so attractive in the eyes of the sweet maiden, that even the cold Richards admired her.

"This is really an enchanting girl," he whispered to me.

"Did I not tell you? Just look how cordially she enters into the old fellow's notions."

Hours had passed like minutes. Supper had long been removed, and we began to break up, Arthurine significantly pressing my hand, and I was in the ninety-ninth heaven.

"Now, friends," said honest Moreland, as we were outside the door, "it would be a pity to part so soon on such a beautiful

evening. What think you of my plan? Come with me, and we will break the necks of another half-dozen bottles."

"Be it so! it is freezingly cold, and old Bowsends's port and sherry are not half as fiery as —"

"As his girls," concluded Moreland, who seemed to have looked pretty often at the bottom of his glass.

We took the old fellow in our midst, and steered toward his cabin, as he called his really splendid house.

"Well, are not these Bowsends excellent people?" began Moreland, as we were seated at his table, which was covered with Lafitte and East India Madeira. "The girls *are* beautiful! Well, well, thinks I—I am gradually getting old, but still fresh, merry, lively, and hearty as a dolphin. Neptune! half-a-dozen girls I could yet—"

"Bury!" I added.

"Yes, by jingo! so I could; but I hope Margaret will hold out. She pleases me, and so I have—"

"Yes, but my dear Moreland, do *you* please her?"

"Pshaw! five hundred thousand dollars! Hark ye, these are not found every day!"

"Fifty years!" I replied.

"Yes, certainly; but sound and hardy, none of your spindleshanks, no Stanton —"

"Yes; but he smokes cigars, and not German pipes."

"Cigars I'll let alone; do you think that for the sake of this Miss, I'd burn mouth and nose with the infernal stumps?"

"And he drinks no whiskey—he is president of a temperance society!"

"Hang him!" growled Moreland. "I would not give up my whiskey for all the girls in Christendom!"

"Then they will be sure to faint," I replied, laughing.

"And Margaret!" he burst out. "Ah! then these groans and sighs, the sinking and disappearing were on account of the Monongahela? Whew! no, no, Miss, this is no go. You may swear that;" and by way of asseveration he emptied his glass, as we also drained ours.

We laughed and kept it up till after midnight, and I took a great deal of credit for my diplomatic skill; as we were going home, Richard said, I had been rather hard on the old bachelor.

"Then I have delivered poor Margaret from this disagreeable suitor," was my reply.

But Richard shook his head. "What

the end of it will be, I know not; but you must not anticipate too much gratitude for your gratuitous interference."

Next morning Richards was occupied in the business which had called him to New-York. I was ten times on the wing to visit Arthurine, but something constantly occurred to prevent me. It was past tea-time as I entered the house. Margaret sat in the drawing-room, digesting a new novel. "Where is Arthurine?" I asked.

"Gone to the theatre with Ma and Mr. Moreland," was the reply.

"In the theatre with Ma and Mr. Moreland?" The piece was "Tom and Jerry," a tremendous favorite with the enlightened Kentuckians. I had seen the first act at Caldwell's theatre in New-Orleans, and it was quite enough for me.

"Really, I call that sacrificing oneself," I said angrily.

"She is a noble girl!" replied Margaret. "Mr. Moreland came to tea, and expressed a most lively desire——"

"That she should accompany him, and annoy herself, by yawning for a couple of hours."

"Her artlessness may, perhaps, succeed in bringing Mr. Moreland round," she whispered.

Yes, that is it, I thought. An attack of jealousy would have been ridiculous. He fifty—she seventeen! I bowed, and hurried away to Richards.

"So early?" he cried, laughing.

"She is gone to the theatre with Moreland and Mamma."

Richards shook his head.

"You have put a wasp's nest into the old fellow's ear. Look out!"

"I should like to see how she looks by his side."

"Well! I'll conduct you. The sooner you are cured the better. But you are not to stay more than ten minutes."

And who could have endured it longer, in the fumes of whiskey and tobacco! It was in the Bowery Theatre. The lights swam, as if they were hung in a fog; while orange-peel, apple-skins and peanuts, beside many other things too numerous to mention, rained down from the gallery. The hero Tom, was just in his favorite scene. I looked up, and there was the fair Arthurine, sitting snugly, and chattering with old Moreland. I could scarcely believe my own eyes. A married woman, at fifty, could not have behaved with more dignity than she did.

"That is a sensible girl," replied Richards; "she looks at the dollars; and would

take Old Hickory himself—pipe, whiskey and all—if he were to propose."

I made no reply.

"If you were not such a ninny," said Richards "I would say, Let her go; and to-morrow we will be off."

"Eight days more," I replied, with a heavy heart.

Next evening, at seven precisely, I again entered the Elysium which was gradually becoming a Tartarus to me. Margaret again sat solitary at her book.

"And Arthurine?" I asked, with a trembling voice.

"Is gone with Mamma and Mr. Moreland, to hear Miss Fanny Wright."

"To hear Miss Fanny Wright—the Atheist—the Revolutionist! That is really too bad. Who would have thought it? This Miss Fanny Wright is dreaded by the fashionable world like a pestilence."

"Mr. Moreland spoke so warmly of her excellent delivery, that Arthurine's curiosity was excited."

"Yes, yes!" I replied.

"Oh! you do not know the noble girl. She would sacrifice her life for her sister. She is my only hope."

"Yes, very—very well!" I said, crushing my hat, and making for the door.

Next morning I could not rest, and the clock had just struck eleven when I was at her door. At length both were at home. Arthurine met me with a kindly smile. There was a certain something in her face, that startled me. I pressed her hand;—she looked tenderly at me.

"It seems that you have been much entertained recently?" I began, after a pause.

"Novelty has charms for me. I really should not have believed that I could become a disciple of Miss Fanny Wright," she said laughing.

"Certainly no great jump from 'Tom and Jerry,'" I replied.

"Please respect 'Tom and Jerry' whom we patronize—that is, Mr. Moreland and myself," she said laughing.

"Really, this conspiracy against good taste, I did not expect of my Arthurine," I replied seriously.

"My Arthurine! my Arthurine!" she said, poutingly. "What liberties the gentleman takes! my Arthurine, but we live in a free country."

Fun and earnest spoken at once from her lovely lips! I cast a scrutinizing glance at her.

"Do you know," she continued, laughingly, "that I have taken quite a fancy to Moreland—he is such a good-natured,

kind man; and then he has nothing rude about him."

"Five hundred thousand dollars," I rejoined.

"That is just the bright side of the matter. Only think of the balls, my dear Howard. Of course we shall see you there. And then, Saratoga; next year, perhaps to London or Paris. Oh! it will be splendid!"

"Already so far advanced?" I asked with bitter irony.

"And sissy is released: is it not so, Margaret?"

She flew to her sister, and the two girls embraced and kissed each other. I knew not whether to laugh or to cry.

"Then I must congratulate," I said with a smile, which must have made me look rather awkward.

"Yes, do congratulate!" said Arthurine, running toward me. "At ten o'clock to-day, Mr. Moreland transferred his suit from Margaret to myself."

"And you!"

"In consideration of his many amiabilities, we have naturally concluded to take his offer—meanwhile *ad protocollum*. You know decorum requires us to keep quiet for at least a few days."

"Are you joking, or in earnest, my dear Arthurine?"

"Perfectly in earnest, my dear Howard."

"Then fare you well!"

"Fare thee well, and, if for ever,
Still for ever, fare the well!"

she said, laughing and signing at the same time.

Upon the stairs I met the turbanned mother; she drew me mysteriously into the parlor.

"You have seen Arthurine? Not so? She is a dear, excellent child! Ah! the girl is our joy, our comfort! Mr. Moreland! the excellent, the charming Mr. Moreland!"

"It is true, then?"

"I may confide in you, as a friend of the family; but of course it must yet remain a secret from the world: Mr. Moreland has formally proposed for her!"

"For whom?"

"Why, for Arthurine!"

"Well, well!" I replied, hurrying into the street as if I had escaped from a mad-house.

"Richards!" I exclaimed, as soon as I saw my friend; "shall we travel?"

"Thank God! the New-York fever then is past. Now you will go with me to Virginia for a few months?"

"Yes," was my reply.

As we were going toward the steamboat the next morning, we met Stanton.

"Congratulate me, I am accepted!"

"And I got the sack!" I rejoined laughing. "I will not be a fool, to cut my throat for a girl!" but in spite of my levity, I felt as if it would break my heart—I loved her so well, the little witch!

CHAPTER II.

A NIGHT ON THE BANKS OF THE TENNESSEE.

"CAN you tell me if we are yet far from Brown's ferry?" said I, inquiring of a man on horseback, who trotted gently along the narrow wagon-road.

It was on the banks of the Tennessee; night had already come upon us; a fog hung over forest and river, which every instant became visibly thicker. The whole landscape had the appearance of a wild chaos; it was impossible to see five steps before us.

The pause of the horseman was nearly as long as this digression. He then replied in a tone, which, to judge from its peculiar modulation, must have been accompanied by a shaking of his head.

"The way to Brown's ferry? Perhaps you mean Coxe's ferry?"

"Well, then, Coxe's ferry?" I replied, somewhat impatiently.

"Yes, old Brown is dead," said the man; "and Betsy has married young Coxe; a pretty smart boy. Well, aint it him?"

"That we don't know," I answered; "but what we would like to know, is, whether we are yet far from his ferry, and on the right road?"

"Ah! the way to the ferry—there's the hook, man; you are five good miles from it; and you might just as well turn your horse's ears the other way. I guess you are strangers in these parts?"

"Oh! Jupiter!" whispered my friend Richards; "we are in the hands of a Yankee. He guesses already."

Meanwhile, in spite of thorns and wet branches which flapped at every step into his face, the horseman had approached nearer to us, and was now quite close. As far as we could judge in the dark, he was rather young, long, lank, and spindle-shanked, with a face like a corpse on his long neck, and brass buttons on his coat.

"And so you have lost your way?" said the man, after a long pause, during which the fog had gradually changed into

a heavy rain. "A strange mistake, where the ferry is not fifteen steps from the road, which runs broad and level down to the river; a strange mistake, I guess, to go up stream, instead of following your nose and the current down!"

"What do you mean?" we asked simultaneously.

"Why, that you have gone up instead of down the stream, and that you are on the road to Bainbridge," said the supposed Yankee.

"On the road to Bainbridge!" we both exclaimed in one voice, so plainly betraying wonder and astonishment, that our friend proceeded to say:

"And you did not intend to go to Bainbridge?"

"How far is the confounded nest from here?" I asked.

"Why, how far, how far?" replied the man with brass buttons. "It ain't very far, and it ain't quite so near, as you might suppose. May-be you know Squire Dimple?"

"I wish your friend Squire Dimple was in Jericho," I grumbled, while my more patient fellow-traveller replied: "No, we don't know him."

"And where might you be travelling to?" began our tormentor, who seemed to be water proof.

"To Florence," was the reply, "and thence down the Mississippi."

"That's a pretty town, as pretty as any in the country. Ain't it now?" asked the Yankee coolly. "And a good market. What is the price of flour in the north? You come from there? they say it's six and four levys, and corn, five and a fip, butter three-fips."

"Are you crazy?" I cried, half mad with involuntary anger, and raising my whip, "to keep us talking here about your flour, and butter, fips and levys, while the rain is pouring down in torrents!"

"Why," was the reply of the man, who now only seated himself more comfortably into his saddle: "If you feel inclined to measure fists or whips with me, come on! I'd like to see the man, that could lick Isaac Shifty."

"Our road, our road, Mr. Isaac Shifty!" interrupted Richards, soothingly.

Again a long pause,—at length he said, inquiringly: "I guess you are peddlers?"

"No, man."

"And what might you be, then?"

This rendered another examination necessary; after his eyes had rested searchingly upon us for some minutes, he said:

"And so you intend to go down the Mississippi?"

"Yes, in the 'Jackson,' that leaves to-morrow as we have heard."

"A good steamboat, I tell ye. Now, ain't it? But I am sure you wont take that thing and your horse down with you?" he continued quietly, examining attentively our gig and horse.

"Yes, we intend doing so."

"Now do tell, have you not seen two women in a dearborn?"

"No, we have not."

"Well then," he continued quietly, "it is now too late to turn back to Bainbridge, and it might be risking something. So turn your horse, and follow the road until you come to the thick walnut tree; there the road forks. Take the right hand for half a mile, till you come to Dim's fence; then you must go through the lanc—then to the right about forty rods, through the sugar camp—then you take the road to the left, till you come to break-neck rock; and then you must be sure to turn to the right again, if you don't want to break your necks; when you are over the creek, turn to the left, and that will bring you direct to Cox's ferry. You can't mistake," he concluded in a confidential tone, giving his horse a lash, that set him in a trot, and carried him out of sight as fast as the swamp and thickets would permit him.

During these never-ending directions, I must have looked like the French recruit, whom the sergeant honored for the first time with an account of the mile-long serpents and crocodiles, the old graybeard had seen in Egypt, and of the monsters that swallowed the drummer of the regiment, bear's-cap, whiskers, staff, and all. I was so astounded that I had forgotten to explain to the man with brass buttons, that it was perfectly impossible to recognize even the large walnut tree in the darkness, much less the track of wagons across break-neck rock.

My blood is not the coolest in the world, and patience is not my principal virtue; but the immovable self-possession of this man amid his shower of words affected me so powerfully, that I burst into a fit of loud laughter. "First to the right, then left! Look out for the big walnut tree, and take care of the break-neck rock!" I cried in laughing despair.

"I wish the bears had this Yankee!" said Richards. "But I do n't see what there is to laugh at."

"And I do n't see why you should be so serious."

"And how in the mischief could we miss the ferry, and what is worse, go back by the same road."

"Well," I replied, "these accursed side-ways, and cowpaths, and wagon-tracks, and cross roads, and swamps account for all. It is absolutely impossible to see the course of the stream; and while you slept I had to look at Cæsar."

"And most admirably you have looked at him," replied Richards angrily. "To go back the same way we came; Jove! it is too bad——"

"To sleep," I grumbled.

We almost quarrelled; but as we knew and loved each other, all further discussions and allusions were at an end. To tell the truth, that we had run astray, was no great marvel. It was one of the last days in May, when we arrived at the banks of the Tennessee. The country around seems to be just made for people to lose their way in it. The road winds along the rocky bank, but no mountain is visible, save a dim outline of the Alleghanies, in the blue distance, and the Grange, which stands like a gigantic sentinel to the right. The thick fog had obscured their pilot peaks, just at the moment when we most needed them. We were in a long valley, *an immense bottom*, to speak in the language of the country, which was used as a sugar camp, and had as many wagon-tracks as owners. The morning had been very fair, but in the afternoon, gray, foggy clouds had covered the edge of the horizon, and gradually spread over the beautiful bed of the Tennessee. With a dense mist over the Tennessee on the one side, and a swamp cut up by a hundred cross paths on the other, we could continue only about a mile further on, ere the road must terminate either in the swamp or in the river. I felt so confident of being near the ferry, that I had expected to see it every moment, until that ominous Yankee put an end to my hopes.

Meanwhile, night had overspread the scene; one of those dark, gloomy nights, with which these sinners of the backwoods are often punished at this particular season of the year. I would as soon have been on the banks of Newfoundland as in these swamps, which seem just created to produce nothing but fevers. The verbose directions of the Yankee, were of course soon forgotten. It would have required the eyes of an owl to distinguish a tree; and the shrieks of these animals, the nightingales of this region, together with the circumstance that a couple of them flew madly toward us, were proofs that

they had lost their way as well as ourselves.

But at any rate we were badly off; and in many respects. The wagon-road wound along the edge of the water, and frequently approached it so closely that one wrong step would have precipitated us into the depths, which, considering the constant swelling of the stream, promised no very comfortable quarters.

"I believe it would be best to get out," I began, "or we will find our night's lodging, or perhaps our death-bed in the Tennessee."

"No danger!" replied Richards; "Cæsar is an old Virginian."

This was meant for our horse; but a knock which nearly threw us backward out of the gig, put an end to this laconic praise of Cæsar, who had thrown himself upon his rump.

"There must be something in the way!" cried Richards; "it is time to look about us."

This we did, got out of the gig, and found an immense walnut-tree lying across the road. There was an end to our journey. To pass this immense tree, or to bring the gig across, seemed an absolute impossibility. The branches, which projected twenty steps in every direction, had already given a severe warning to Cæsar. The wagon-road was so narrow, that the turning of the gig was not to be thought of, and we had to back out like crabs. Richards endeavored to find a road, and I to push the gig back.

But we had undertaken more than we could accomplish. My right foot had scarce left the track, when my cloak was caught off by a thorn more than two inches long. To pass unwounded through this wilderness, would only have been possible for a man in armor. I extricated my cloak, and hurried back to the wagon-track. After a while, Richards came up to me saying:

"This is the most hopeless wilderness of the entire west; no road—no path. Swamp up to the ears! and to complete our mishap, I have lost one of my Monroe boots in the mire."

"And I think there are as many holes in my cloak, as there are thorns on this accursed locust-tree," I replied, by way of consolation.

These were the last words, spoken in something like good-humor, for we now were wet to the skin, and I really believe, that of all possible situations, being thoroughly soaked is the least calculated to encourage pleasantries. The French, and

their antipodes, the Hollanders, illustrate this. The former only become warm-blooded and jocose, in the warm days of June or July, and the latter are anything but a merry, or good-humored people—a fault, or rather a virtue, which undoubtedly may be ascribed to their vegetating among drains, canals and swamps. Now, for my own part, I love a moderate adventure, provided it is not too costly, and I abominate a monotonous, annoying, Quaker-journey, where everything is as cold, tame and uninteresting, as the good people themselves; but to be surprised by floods and darkness in a swamp—to have on one side the swollen Tennessee within three steps of us, on the other an impenetrable wilderness; in front this immense walnut-tree, and, moreover, to be unable to retrace our steps—really! with all due respect for adventure, this was no joke.

“Well, what is to be done?” demanded Richards, who had put himself in a most theatrical attitude, placing the bootless foot on the step of the gig, while the other sunk into the mud.

“We must unhitch Cæsar, and pull out the gig,” I replied, with my usual brevity.

Would to heaven this had been as easily done as said. Our wishes are seldom or never fulfilled. But we went to work, and with immense labor carried it back some twenty steps, where there was a little open space. Our controversy with Cæsar was now suddenly interrupted by a loud hallo! which resounded close before us.

Reader! have you ever attended a closely contested election? and have you ever in your patriotism staked ten or a hundred dollars on your favorite candidate? and then, suddenly, in all the foam of perspiration, when you had nearly lost your senses from the fumes of tobacco and brandy, have you heard the result, which refunded your hundred dollars with a hundred per cent. advance? If you have ever experienced this, then, and *only* then, can you have an idea of the sudden joy, which now warmed our cold bosoms. The hallo! was echoed in such genuine Yankee style, that it might have broken the fog, and awakened all the red generations that slumbered in the swamp.

“And now, for Heaven’s sake, have patience!” cried Richards; “and hold your tongue for at least a quarter of an hour, else you will again ruin all with this infernal Yankee.”

“Don’t fear,” I replied, for my hot blood had considerably cooled down in the shower-bath, independent of the prospect of passing the entire night in this diabol-

ical hole. I would willingly have given this tough rascal information concerning the butter, potatoe and flour markets in the States, on condition that he would deliver us as soon as possible from this execrable fever-swamp.

It was the Yankee, large as life. In the regular manner of Connecticut, he had waited for some minutes before us, without uttering a syllable. It almost seemed as if he enjoyed our predicament, and was in no great hurry to release us from it. As for ourselves, we had to be particularly careful, for the morose scarecrow seemed little inclined to take a joke. Friend Richards at last broke silence with the words:

“Bad weather, friend!”

“Well, I could n’t say it was,” replied the Yankee.

“You have not met the two women you were looking for?”

“No, I guess they stopped at Florence with cousin Kate.”

“You don’t intend to go there?” again asked Richards.

“No, I am going home. But I thought you were at the ferry, by this time.”

“And so we would be, if your roads were better, and stones lay in the holes instead of walnut trees,” replied Richards, laughing.

“You have no notion for the ferry to-night?”

“We have certainly the inclination, but the ability, friend! you know, that is the main point.”

“Yes, so it is,” replied the man, with a real schoolmaster’s face. “Well, if you’ll go back to Bainbridge, you can go with me. You had better give me the reins, and my mare will follow after us.”

It was at least five minutes longer, ere the fellow concluded his preparations. At last, to our great joy, we were all three seated in the gig.

Now, after more than fifty cross-questions, which would have done honor to a Philadelphia lawyer, we had finally entered into a kind of alliance with Mr. Isaac Shifty, and were safely on the road to one of the hundred famous towns of Alabama, none of which had its equal in the United States.

I know not how it happens that I am always deceived in my anticipations. I had hoped, that the distance from the accursed swamp to our place of refuge, would not be too great, in proportion, to what we had to endure from our troublesome pilot. But it seemed immense, and the impatience of Horace during his famous promenade, was nothing compared to mine. Our Yankee found abundant leisure to touch upon at

least a dozen different subjects and objects. The first he treated, was of course his own worthy self.

From the short biographical notice he gave us, it appeared that he was born in Connecticut, and of no mean parentage—that he began his career as a schoolmaster, but exchanged this station for a less honored one—that of a peddler—from which he again advanced to become a shop or store-keeper, and that he was now a most respectable and made man, as he modestly assured us. We were next informed concerning the merchandise in which he trafficked; and several side-thrusts were indulged in at a certain Mr. Pursecut, who had dared to become his rival, but whom heaven itself had punished for his presumption, by the loss of several dozen knives, forks, and shoes, which were sunk on the muscle shoals.

This again gave occasion to speak of the thousand and one accidents, which occur on these shoals, and from these he naturally branched off to the various means of transportation which the enlightened inhabitants of Alabama were accustomed to use, such as steamers and keelboats, and barges and flatboats, and broadhorns and arks, as these different vessels are called; then followed the covered wagons, ferries, common boats, yawls, dug-outs, and finally the canoes.

Our Yankee did not omit the canal-system, by which the waters of the Tennessee were to be united with—Heaven knows what ocean. It was a monstrous plan, as far as I remember; but, whether this connection was to be with Raritan Bay, or, farther yet, with Connecticut river, I have now forgotten.

Finally, to our great joy, we entered upon the history of Bainbridge;—a certain sign, as I imagined, that we were approaching the end of our journey. But even that ray of joy, moderate as it was, appeared destined, like a long-wished-for lighthouse, to try our patience a good while longer, ere we could enter the harbor of our hope. We had first to hear the entire Topography of this celebrated place—how it was laid out at right angles—how flourishing its commerce was—and how eligible a location it would be for us if we had an inclination to settle there—how he, Mr. Shifty, had a dozen good town-lots for sale—how the town had already three taverns, just the fair proportion to ten houses or huts, which constituted Bainbridge—how two of these taverns, however, were now full of people—how the electioneering was going on there

—and how the third was not much of a tavern, being somewhat uninhabitable.

Such was the tenor of his remarks, as the word electioneering suddenly put a stop to them.

"Electioneering!" said Richards.

"An election!" I uttered.

Really the word stuck in my throat. An election in Alabama, which, even in Kentucky is designated as the backwoods! Farewell to all hopes of supper, sleep, bed, room and clean linen after such a horrible tour.

We had not time to say another syllable, for Cæsar, who for some time had been working his way through an ocean of mire, suddenly stopped. A dimly trembling tallow candle, floating in an atmosphere of tobacco smoke, and the bawling of twenty throats indicated our harbor. We jumped out of our gig; and, while Richards was tying Cæsar to a post, I walked toward the door, when I felt myself pulled back by my cloak.

"Not here, not here! this is the house you must stop at!" cried Mr. Shifty, pointing anxiously to a thing, somewhat between a house and a hut.

"Don't mind him," I whispered to Richards, glad to get rid of this intolerable bore. Richards paused, but my hand was already on the latch, and we entered.

Some were seated, with their feet on the table; others stood, although, indeed, few were able to assume an erect attitude. All staggered and roared. I did not much like this worthy company. Richards first mingled with the mass. I was astonished at his daring, considering his bootless foot; but the merry carousers seemed inclined to show us their politeness. They made room to the right and left, and thus left us a passage a foot wide, lined by a six-foot-six-inch-high human wall, while they examined us from head to foot. The mishap of my friend still escaped their eyes, when Richards solemnly walked to the bar, and turning to the crowd of half-horse, half-aligator faces, cried: "Hurrah for old Alabama, and may the Old Harry take the road-inspector of Bainbridge!"

"Are you mad?" I whispered to him.

"I'll be shot, if he do n't feel the mark of these five knuckles on his carcass!" cried a voice from a mammoth throat, which was just about to swallow half a pint of Monongahela.

But before the square-built Goliath could execute his threat, he emptied quietly his half-pint of whisky, and then stepped forward, putting his flat hand down upon Richards's shoulder with a force that made

the poor fellow shrink like a lame duck. At the same time the monster looked into his face with an expression, which showed the natural hardness of his features and his owl's eyes in any other light than an amiable one.

"May the Old Harry, I say, take the road-inspector of Bainbridge!" cried Richards, half in jest and half in earnest, lifting at the same time, his muddy, bootless foot upon a chair. "Look here, boys! it is gone *below*—that is, my boot. The infernal swamp between this and the ferry, was polite enough to pull it off for me!"

The roar of laughter which followed, would certainly have broken the windows had they been glazed; luckily, however, they were stuffed with fragments of old inexpressibles, worn-out coats and roundabouts.

"Come, boys!" cried Richards, "it was not badly meant, but certainly I lost my boots in this accursed swamp."

This was the most fortunate impromptu that ever introduced weary wanderers into such a company—peace, harmony, and friendship were restored at once.

"May I be shot like a red-skin, if that is not Mr. Richards from Old Virginia, and lately from Mississippi!" suddenly cried the Goliath, who had just put his hand on Richards's shoulder, while his half-wild look changed into a merry grin. "May I never put a bottle of real Monongahela to my lips, if you won't have to empty a pint with Bob Shags, the road-inspector!"

So it was this self-same dignitary whom friend Richards had hit so hard, though at the risk of his shoulder-blade.

"Hurrah for Old Virginia!" cried the road master, biting, at the same time, a piece of tobacco of the growth of that famous state. "Come, Mister; come, Doctor!" said the man, offering the plug of tobacco with the one hand, and a pint glass with the other.

"Doctor!" repeated the chorus of the assemblage.

"A doctor!" they repeated again.

A man, who has gin and whisky at his command, and whose word is good for a "smaller," is no trifling person in these fever-regions.

In our case, the doctorship was of double advantage, in delivering us from the immense pint-tumblers, and at the same time making us privileged visitors; a circumstance, of no trifling importance in a bar-room, which enjoys the distinguished honor of being the head-quarters of an election party.

Cæsar was the first to earn the real

benefit of this discovery. Bob for a moment had left the room, and now returned with a most patronizing air.

"Mister Richards!" he cried; "Mister Richards! may I be shot, if you hav'n't always been a most sensible man, with more real blood in you, than would suffice to swim a horse. Yes, and I will prove to you, that Bob Shags is also a man. Hallo, Doctor! what countryman is your horse?"

"A real Virginian," replied Richards.

"The devil he is!" cried Bob; "well, to prove my friendship to you, I will swap with you '*unsight, unseen*.' May I be shot, if I ain't bit by it. Well, I am real glad to see you. Bob Shags need not mind looking a real *gemman* into the face. Come boys! no *Jammakey*, no *slings*, no *poorgun*, and such infernal kind of drinks, but real Monongahela whisky! Hurrah for old Virginia! By the way, shall we not look at the old Virginian?"

"No, Bob!" cried Richards, laughing, "your generosity is so truly Alabamian, that I cannot agree to it; and for this time I must keep my old Virginian, for it is my wife's favorite horse."

"But Swiftfoot," replied Bob, cordially—"he is an excellent trotter."

"No go," was the reply, "no go, would n't dare to go home with him!"

Bob bit his lips; the attempt at a horse-trade had at least the effect of delivering us meanwhile from the whisky-glasses. Bob seemed to have forgotten all about his offer of the pint-glass. He raised it to his mouth, and, as I live, emptied the contents at a draught.

My wet clothes began to lie heavy about me: the atmosphere was strongly impregnated. Bob had looked at me several times; he now asked: "Who may this Mister be?"

My name and rank produced a welcome which literally brought tears to my eyes. After every pressure of the hand, I looked to see if the blood was not oozing from my nails. Real bear's paws, rough as French turnpikes.

"I'm glad, boys, that you have come," continued Bob in a low confidential tone; "I am just about to try for the next election for Assembly, and you know it is always well to have a good name. How long is it, Mr. Richards, since I left Blairsville?"

"Eight years," was the reply.

"No, Harry Richards!" whispered the road-inspector, "no, I hope to be shot if it is more than five."

"But," replied Richards, "I have been five years down the Mississippi, and you know——"

"Pshaw!" said the man, "it is five

years, on my soul, not an hour more, when you are asked: do you understand?" he added significantly.

The candidate for office had run away from his former place of residence, Richards's birthplace, on account of certain difficulties between himself, the sheriff and the constable; and after roving about a few years, had settled near Bainbridge, where he seemed to thrive well, as far at least as whisky and human weakness would permit him. We could scarcely keep from laughing aloud at the importance with which Bob thought proper to invest us. Theophrastus Paracelsus was a mere tinker compared with the celebrated Doctor Richards; his twenty-five negroes were increased to a hundred, and the wilderness I owned, was worth at least five hundred thousand dollars. It would have been dangerous to contradict the braggadocio, ever ready, as he was, to support his assertion with his bear's paws.

Finally, Richards was enabled to introduce, amid the clamor, the question:

"You don't certainly intend to make a stump speech right off?"

"May I be shot, if I don't. As I live, I will do it."

"Very well, then perhaps we may change our dress, and dispatch our supper?" asked Richards.

"Change your dress?" repeated Bob contemptuously; "and why so, my boy? Not on our account; you are well enough, clean enough, and need not mind us. But if you think proper, you may do so. Hallo, Johnny!"

And he immediately began his negotiations with Johnny, the landlord, who, to our great joy, took a light, and showed us into a kind of back parlor, with the assurance that we need not wait long for our supper.

"Is there no other room, where we could change our dress?" I asked.

"Oh, certainly," replied the publican; "there is the garret; only my daughters and about a dozen girls sleep there; and then there's the kitchen."

I looked sorrowful, for the girl began to lay out the table, and unfortunately the room was connected with the kitchen by an open door, through which we had the benefit of a terrific noise.

"Six *smallers* it ain't buffalo-skin!" cried a young stentor from the kitchen.

"Six *smallers* it is calf-skin!" cried a second.

"I am mistaken if these boobies are not honoring our portmanteaus with an examination," said Richards, pointing to the kitchen.

"Well, that would be too bad," I replied. But so it was. Not that we feared to lose the portmanteaus, or see them damaged; but to get them well out of these bear's-paws, would be impossible, otherwise than by a well-executed joke. And I feared these jokes, for there is always a risk of a broken arm or leg. The kitchen was full of people; in the middle was a knot of boys, six feet in height, one of whom held a burning light. A sonorous voice cried:

"No; devil take me if I pay, unless I see what is in it."

The young fellows were just disputing whether the covers were buffalo or calf-skin. They had observed the portmanteaus as they were carried into the back-parlor, and at once made them the object of bets.

"I'll bet sixteen *smallers*," cried my friend, "they are deer-skin!"

"Sixteen, they aint!" answered ten voices, amid a roar of laughter.

"Well, it is a bet," said my friend; "but let us see what we have bet on."

"Room there for the gamman!" bawled the company.

"They are our portmanteaus," cried Richards, laughing; "well, really, they are not deerskin. Here is my bet."

A loud hurrah, that still sounds in my ears, followed the dollar; but the consequence was, that our portmanteaus were immediately restored.

Only one thing more was necessary—the exclusive possession of a room—at least for a quarter of an hour.

"We would be alone for a few moments," I said to the girl, who was quickly moving in and out, bringing twenty large and small plates with pastry, cucumbers, beets, preserves, &c. &c., and placing them on the table.

I shut the door, while Richards observed with a smile: "that is exactly the way to have it opened again."

Scarce had he said the word, when the door flew open amid a roar of laughter.

"Tails!" cried one of the jovial fellows.

"Heads!" replied the other.

"They are trying to get another dollar," observed Richards; "well, we must humor them."

"Heads!" he cried.

"Lost!" responded the chorus.

"Here, boys, is something to pay for drinks," said my friend, whose astonishing equanimity and good temper, had brought us luckily through all the troubles of the backwoods life, with a facility which had its peculiar charm.

We now closed the door, and had ample time to exchange our wet clothes for dry ones. Scarce had we finished our change, when a slight tap at the window attracted our attention thither. And whom did we discover? Master Isaac Shifty, who had thought proper to turn his back upon us, when we entered the tavern.

"Gentlemen!" whispered the man, as he removed the fragment of a vest from the place where another pane of glass should have been, and then put his face through the aperture; "gentlemen, I was mistaken. You did not come to the election, as our spies tell us, but from the lower Mississippi."

"And if we did, what then?" I replied drily. "Did we not tell you so?"

"Yes you did; but you might have fooled me. And as you see, they are electioneering here, and we have an opposition party at the other tavern; and as we knew they expected two men from below, we thought you were the party."

"And as you believed us on the wrong side of the question, you left us to stick in the mud, with the pleasant prospect of having our necks broken, or being drowned in the Tennessee!" remarked Richards, laughing.

"Not just that," replied the Yankee; "though we would rather have seen you remain over night in the swamp, in case you had been those two men; but now we know what we are at, and I am come to offer you my house. There will be a thundering frolic here, and perhaps more than that. In my house you can sleep as quietly as anywhere."

"That is impossible, Mister Shifty!" answered Richards, with a glance, which must have told the Yankee that we penetrated his object.

The door leading into the kitchen, now moved, and put a close to our conversation. The sharp gray eyes of the Yankee, had alternately watched us and the door, for the latch had scarcely moved, ere the opening of the window was filled up again, and our hospitable Yankee had disappeared.

"He needs us," said Richards, "because he fears our protecting presence might give too much weight to Bob. You see, they have their spies; should Bob and his party discover it, then there will be some fighting. We certainly are in a real squatter's-cabin, not very reputable, but we must hold out."

The table was set, and the tea and coffee-cups sent up their pleasant steam. It was an excellent supper—real Alabama delicacies. Pheasants and snipe, or, as

they call them here, woodcocks, a fine saddle of venison, which, in spite of the forest laws, had found its way to Johnny's house, together with wheat, buckwheat, and corn-cakes. We had already discussed the first, and were just trying the latter, which, to the honor of Bainbridge be it said, no Parisian restaurateur could have surpassed, when Bob's voice was heard in a loud bawl. He had begun his canvass, and was delivering his maiden stump-speech. It was high time to make an end of our supper, and to enlist ourselves among the auditors of the mighty road-master, under whose protection we had hitherto fared well; at least we had got through without broken limbs. The etiquette of the backwoods required our presence, and to satisfy this demand upon our courtesy, we rose at once and entered the assembly.

At the upper end of the table, and near the bar, stood Bob Shags, president, speaker, and candidate—all in all. An inkstand, which was placed in front of a square-built fellow, marked him as secretary. Bob's features grew dark as we entered, undoubtedly on account of our late appearance; but Cicero himself could not have taken a better turn against the conspirator Catiline, than Bob took, in his own favor, on our entrance.

"And these *gemmen*," he continued; "these *gemmen* could tell you—yes, prove you to me on black and white, and bear witness to my respectability. May I be shot, if it ain't good, as good as that of the best man in the States."

"No better than it should be!" interrupted a voice.

Bob cast a dark glance at the speaker; but his smile seemed well meant, and all were peaceable. Bob coughed and continued:

"Yes, we need men, who know something, who can tell black from white, and who won't let the 'Ministration throw dust into their eyes, but defend our inalienable rights—the natural rights of the sovereign people. May I be shot, if I budge an inch, no, not for the best man living; provided, boys, that you honor me with your confidence, and—yes, you must do that, else—"

Here the unanimous roar of the meeting interrupted the speaker, with a thundering: "Let's go the whole hog!"

"The whole hog!" repeated Bob, bringing back his fists to the table; "that's the word! the whole hog!—the people—that is what I have always said! Now, boys, don't you think, that our great gentlemen cost us too much money? Devil take me, boys! if I won't do it as well for one third

of the money. Just hear, six teams, each of four horses, could not haul all the silver that Johnny* and his 'Ministration has cost us. Here boys, here it is, in black and white."

Bob had a bundle of papers before him, which at first we had mistaken for a dirty pocket-handkerchief, but which were the county newspapers; where somebody had very smartly reduced the amount which the First Magistrate of the Union, who was just going out of office, had received as salary during his official term, to wagon-loads—an excellent way of making the squandering of public money tangible. Bob stopped, while his neighbor put on his spectacles and began to read. But all interrupted him:

"We know it! we have read it long ago! go on!"

"No!" cried Bob, "just look! Diplomatic Missions! what is meant by that? Whom do they need to send? Now they have employed a certain *General Tariff*, one of the wildest aristocrats that ever lived. And he has passed a law, that we are to have no more trade with England! The infernal aristocrat has put a duty upon every stocking or knife-handle that comes over! Where are we to get our flannels from?"

"Hooraw!" cried one of the spectators, whose red flannel shirt seemed to indicate the propriety of looking out for a new one.

"And again," continued Bob, "they have put a drag on our navigation to benefit their manufactories. Manufactories! — Men! sovereigns! free citizens! to work in manufactories!"

"Hooraw! hooraw!" resounded from every side.

"But," continued Bob, mysteriously; "this is not all! No, boys! hear, and judge for yourselves! You, the enlightened free citizens of the State of Alabama, can judge and see for yourselves! Yes; the 'Ministration and the Yankees, do you know what they did?"

"Hooraw!" again cried many voices.

"They have done no less," continued Bob, "than to send clothing, 'munition, arms, flour, and whisky, to the *Creeks*!† They have sent two full ship-loads! Here it is!" cried Bob, taking up another paper from the table.

A breathless silence prevailed during this terrible accusation, which was now read, word for word. We could scarcely

keep from laughing; but it was absolutely necessary to refrain.

Bob continued:

"And they would have them back across the Mississippi, and into Georgia—yes, and into Alabama, too. And they held meetings, and made speeches in their favor; and say, that to these infernal Creeks, we owe our civilization! And they have already their chiefs, such as Alexander, whom they call 'the great,' and Pericles, and Plato, and all such names, as we give to niggers! Yes; and the cursed red-skins are fighting with another chief they call Sultan, who lives on *Turk's Island*, away Down East! Where are we to get our salt from?"

The storm which had been brewing for some time, now burst forth in its fury, which shook the very log walls of the house. In spite of the almost irresistible inclination to laugh, we had both suppressed it bravely. But in the midst of this storm, loud peals of laughter suddenly burst forth. Bob and his friends listened. The thundering cry of "A spy! a spy!" had scarce been uttered by him, ere the whole mass rushed toward the door, through which a person, who certainly seemed qualified for such an office, had just escaped. The unfortunate wretch was just caught at the right time, and brought before the high tribunal. His cries, however, brought the whole mass of his friends, who were similarly engaged at the next tavern, to his aid. A general fight was now unavoidable, and our principal care was to escape from it. As quickly as possible we hastened through the kitchen, and thence to the yard.

"Hold!" whispered a voice; "you are at the edge of a pool, that an ox might drown in, and I hope you wont slight my invitation?"

It was Mr. Isaac Shifty, a trustier pilot withal, than we had believed him to be. In the tavern, the battle was just at its height. We considered what was best to do, when it suddenly became quiet.

"What is this?" we cried with astonishment, hurrying through the kitchen to the scene of battle.

It was only the constable and his staff, who had entered in the heat of the fight. His appearance alone effected what a hundred body-guards of a tyrant could not have accomplished—an instantaneous armistice. The command of "order in the name of the law," had touched Bob and his companions with a magical power, and peace was suddenly restored.

We would have had a comfortable night, were it not that Bob *turned-in* with us, and

* John Quincy Adams, then President of the U. S.

† Bob mistakes the Creek Indians for the Greeks.

we consequently were three in a bed. Before the dawn of day, however, he had gone. We entered the bar-room at a late hour; the room was still in its old place, but it bore terrible marks of a desperate struggle. Benches, chairs, and tables lay about in ruins, the floor was covered with broken bottles and glasses, and even the sanctum of the bar itself had not been saved from partial destruction.

As we approached the stable, to pay our visit to Cæsar, I found, to my great annoyance, that my gig was pasted all over with election handbills and hurrahs for Bob Shags; and Richards found Cæsar's tail cut off as clean and close, as if the rascals had shaved it. Our breakfast, however, was excellent, and under better auspices than we had the day before we started upon our journey to Florence.

CHAPTER III.

THE KIDNAPPER.

Yes, it is sublime and almost terrible, to view these primeval forests covering thousands of miles with their mighty shadows. How many cries of sorrow and despair have here been raised unheard by any human ears! how many bloody deeds, at the bare mention of which the strongest heart would shudder! Many here have been frowned upon by these leafy monarchs! It seems as if nature's very grandeur invited to great and terrible crimes. Even at this day, my heart feels as if in a vice when I recollect that awful scene. Yes, truth is sometimes more cruel than the most striking sarcasm—more terrible than the fire of the wildest fancy. How happens it, that the divine spark that dwells in man—his reason—so seldom illuminates his heart, when on the contrary, his evil spirit, if I may call it such, finds its way through his whole inner being! I have often endeavored to untie this Gordian knot, but my labor has hitherto been vain, and my thoughts become more entangled the more I muse on the strange contrast.

These ideas unwittingly became real when about a fortnight after that famous night on the banks of Tennessee, we were opposite the heights of Hopefield, floating down the Mississippi in the Jackson.

Hopefield is a small place on the western banks of the stream, about six hundred miles above New Orleans, and five hundred below the mouth of the Ohio. There are about fifteen houses, of which two bear the title of taverns and stores—as whisky,

together with a few dozen knives and forks, some variegated handkerchiefs, pots, powder, and tobacco—are sold at these establishments.

The place possesses little interest; yet the eyes of the whole company were fixed with a painful gaze on the log-huts and on the large cotton-trees behind them.

I was standing, together with friend Richards and most of our fellow-passengers, at the taffrail, when suddenly a young woman snatched her child from the arms of a negress who stood behind her, and pressed it with great emotion to her bosom.

"And does the poor father still live?" inquired a third woman, shuddering.

No answer was returned.

After a while Richards turned to me, and said: "You have seen him?"

"I have."

The eyes of the whole company were fixed upon me in inquiring expectation, and I proceeded as follows:

It was in the beginning of December, in the year eighteen hundred and twenty-five, when I was going down the Mississippi in the *Feliciana*. Near the heights of this very Hopefield, Hempstead county, as you know, one of our wheels struck against a sawyer and broke to pieces, which obliged us to stop at the town.

Our company was composed of ten ladies, as many young, and several *old* gentlemen. There is nothing more pleasant on the banks of the Mississippi, than an excursion into the country, and as we had nothing to do in the town, the proposal of some of our party to make a trip into the forest was carried by acclamation.

The son of one of the innkeepers offered himself as our guide. Each of us provided himself with a gun and a bottle of wine or brandy as antidotes or precautions against the vapors arising from the swamps; our guide was loaded with a large ham and a supply of crackers, with which our captain presented us as common property, out of the ship stores. Thus provided, we set out on our excursion, accompanied by the best wishes of the ladies, who went with us a short distance into the forest. The western bank of the swamp was covered with a profusion of palmetto, the usual shelter of deer, bears, and even panthers. Our principal object in coming hither, was to search this place.

We divided therefore into two parties—the first with the guide, whom the New-Englanders followed, was to go round the swamp in the northern direction, while we took our course round its southern borders,

Both parties were to meet again on the other side, on a path which led through a thick hedge of wild plum and locust-trees. These orders were not very definite—as they were given in a backwoodsman's style; but as questions would only have confused our guide, we parted, relying upon our own sound judgment and the pocket compasses, with which we were amply supplied. Our course, as I have said, was in a southern direction.

At the farther end of the swamp, we had to turn to the west, and then to steer a northern course along the palmetto.

Until now we had—with the exception of some flights of wild pigeons and some squirrels—seen no animals but snakes, which we found basking themselves in the last rays of the sun; snake-dragons glittering in the colors of the rainbow, moccasin-snakes concealing themselves at our approach under a heap of leaves—or horn-serpents, rising slowly with a peculiar whine.

After a couple of hours we had reached the southern point of the marshy hollow. We now turned northward, having the water to the right and the palmetto-field to our left. The ground which we now walked on, was, as is generally the case in cane-brakes, firm and unyielding. The grass came up to our ankles; and now, as we entered this majestic primeval forest, every chatterer became silent. Is it the deep, imposing earnestness that spreads itself through this beautiful wilderness, the solemn silence which is only interrupted by our footsteps and by the falling leaves—or is it the magnificent sight of these proud trees, attempting, as one would think, to reach the heavens—that so strangely affects our senses? I now remarked that the Northerners, who had never been farther than Albany or Saratoga Springs, had at once assumed a look almost gloomy and downcast. The leaves of the cotton-trees, those giants in the southwestern forests, were now clothed in the colors of autumn; only solitary sunbeams sometimes lighted up their yellow-green tint; and whenever this happened the landscape was of such magic brilliancy, that it made my companions stare in mute astonishment. The roots and bushes hanging down from the trees full twenty feet, bore testimony to the power of the current, which sometimes inundated the banks for twenty or thirty miles, giving the land the appearance of a boundless lake. Here and there a magnolia was to be seen, with its snowy flowers, or a latalgra with the *Acos Indicus*, and its long leaves and cucumber-like

plants, on which shining redbirds or paroquets were perched in beauty.

While the two Boston clerks expected to see a wild animal in every bush, and had already, to the great amusement of our guide—who, with the air of a surly backwoodsman, left their silly questions unanswered—more than ten times raised their guns on a panther or a grim bear; we arrived after an hour's search at another vast swamp, formed by the floods of the river, and covering a space of nearly five miles, running from north to south, with a broad, green stripe of clear water in its middle. But the stream had no banks. Immediately beside it was the deep swamp, so that our only choice was to break through the palmetto or make our way across the swamp, of which the borders were adorned by high cedars standing four or five feet in the water, while the mirror-like surface reflected their mighty crowns.

We halted, for a little while, to enjoy this beautiful view. The broad stripe of water glittered like an enormous band of silver outstretched upon the ground, and the least motion of the leaves was visible in this magnificent looking-glass. Sometimes a soft zephyr would rise, and after setting the leaves and the palmettos in motion, lose itself in the gentle waves of the lake. The water, itself, had a tint of the most beautiful light-green, and the stems of the palmetto played brilliantly, like myriads of glimmering swords and lances, in the shivering flood. In the little bays were swans, pelicans, and wild geese, bathing themselves, and cleaning their plumage for their wintry flight, allowed us to approach within twenty paces of them, and then soared toward the skies, seeking for safety in a speedy flight.

We had continued our way for some time to the north, when our attention was roused by a slow but regular rattling in the palmetto. Something was approaching at a slow pace, and we put ourselves cautiously on the alert. Perhaps it was a deer, a panther, or a bear—most probably the latter. We looked to our guns, got them ready, and went onward some few yards more, when we were startled by a hollow roaring, and immediately thereafter a leap, a rattling, and a strange noise which soon lost itself in an opposite direction. One of our companions, who had before been bear hunting, hurried as quickly as he possibly could through the palmetto thicket, until he was out of sight. We had unfortunately no dog with us, and after prowling about the place half an hour, we felt convinced that we would be

obliged to return with empty hands. By our watches it was now time for us to be at the point, where we were to meet with the party which had taken the other way around the swamp; but our bear pursuer, who had returned, assured us that the palmetto grove was bordered on that side by a terrible thicket of plum, apple, and locust trees, and that there was no possible passage through it.

We soon convinced ourselves of the truth of his assertions. The higher grounds of the canebrake gradually sank into a low marsh, which stretched itself beside the lake from north to south.

Whoever has been in such a wilderness, can easily imagine our embarrassment at such an obstacle, as we had already lost four hours of the eight which we allowed ourselves. It seemed that nothing was left us, but to find our way back. Before we came to this conclusion, however, we tried once more to find the path indicated by our guide, and for this purpose we separated and started in several directions.

In about half an hour, during which we had to work ourselves through thorns and bushes, a loud hurrah informed us that the path was found. We all hurried toward the point from which the voice of our companion proceeded. He had made a discovery; but instead of a path, he had found a cow! Yet we accepted gladly this treasure. The question now arose whether this was a stray cow or a civilized respectable one, which returned decently and regularly to the home of her owner in the evenings. A hardy Ohioan decided the question, and assured us that the cow had been milked in the morning of that very day. The more important question, how to get the cow to show us her way home, was likewise solved by him to our great satisfaction, by his placing himself behind the cow and firing his gun near her tail. The animal made one jump, and then ran into the thicket as if a pack of mad-dogs had been after her. The animal's acquaintance with the wilderness led us soon to a path, on which we could walk with much more ease. At last we reached the pathway which led to the appointed rendezvous.

We now followed at leisure the traces of the cow. After marching about a mile, we observed the forest becoming lighter, which induced us to conclude that a large clearing was not far off.

Soon afterward, we saw fences and fields of corn; and lastly, in the background, a house built of logs, the smoking chimney of which assured us of the presence of a backwoodsman. The house

was quietly situated upon a little eminence. It was covered with clapboards, and had behind it a barn, and those other small buildings near it, which are generally found on the settlements of backwoodsmen of some fortune. The front of the house was decorated with peach-trees, and with groups of papaws, the whole forming a beautiful rural view.

As we were leaning across the fence, a pair of large bull-dogs rushed with open jaws toward us. We kept the dogs, which became every moment still more furious, at bay, as well as we could, when a man opened the barn-door, and immediately closed it. A few seconds after he again made his appearance, together with two negroes, who were dragging out by the horns the same cow which we had forced to such a speedy retreat. We saluted the man with a "good morning!" He returned no answer, and glanced at us with a cold, gloomy look. He was tall and muscular; his face was strongly marked, but very dull and almost repulsive. There was something restless, something disturbed in his countenance, which one perceived at a glance.

"A beautiful morning," said I, approaching him.

No answer. He held the cow by both horns, and his eye was steadily fixed on the beast's tail, from which some drops of blood flowed down on the ground.

"How far is it to Hopefield?" I asked.

"Far enough never to get there, if you were hunting my cow," was his threatening answer.

"And if we have done it, you should not think hard of it. It was a mere accident."

"Accidents of this kind don't happen often. Folks don't shoot at cows, if they do not intend to eat other peoples' meat."

"You would not suppose," rejoined the Ohio man gently, "that when we took your cow for our aim, we did it with the intention of getting some turkies to bring with us to our steamboat. We are passengers on the Pelicana; one of our wheels has been broken on a sawyer, and that is the cause of our lying at Hopefield, and of our being here——"

The man had explained the case with real Ohio minuteness; the backwoodsman however gave no answer, and we walked toward the house.

In the room we found his wife. There was also something gloomy in her features, although not so repulsive as were those of her husband. A deep grief seemed to be the chief expression of her face.

"Could we get something to eat?" I asked the woman.

"We keep no tavern," was her answer.

"Our companions of the other party cannot be far off," one of us remarked. "We will give them the signal to join us."

With these words, he walked a few steps across a cotton-field.

"Stop!" cried the backwoodsman, placing himself in his way; "you shall not go a single step farther, till you tell me where you come from."

"Where I come from?" replied our companion, a young physician from Tennessee; "that, neither you nor any other man will know, if the question is asked in that manner. If I am not mistaken, we are in a free country." And with these words he fired his gun.

The echo resounded so loud and majestic through the forest which girded the plantation, that two others also prepared to fire their guns. I made a sign to them, however, and they did not accomplish their purpose. It seemed best to be prepared for every emergency, although we felt no anxiety or fear. In a few moments we heard a shot—the reply to our signal.

"Do not trouble yourself unnecessarily," said I to the host; "our comrades have heard our signal, and will in a few minutes be here. With regard to your cow, you ought to have common sense enough to know that five travellers would not hunt after a thing utterly useless to them."

While I spoke these words our other party came from the forest, the guide at their head carrying on his back two large wild turkeys. He saluted the backwoodsman as an old acquaintance; but withal, this salute had something so kind, yet so reserved, that it formed a strange contrast to his generally rough and uncouth behavior.

"Well, Mr. Clarke," said he, "nothing heard yet? I am very sorry."

The backwoodsman made no reply, but his daring physiognomy changed suddenly into a dark gaze. A tear, it seemed, started into his eye.

"Mrs. Clarke," continued the guide to the wife, who now came out from the house, "these gentlemen wish something for dinner. We have been hunting enough I should think. We are bountifully supplied with everything. Would you have the goodness to prepare something?"

The woman stood without uttering a word; the husband also was mute. In both their countenances I read something reluctant and inhospitable, which I had

never before met with among the inhabitants of the backwoods.

"Would you have the kindness," repeated the guide, "to roast a turkey for us, with some ham and eggs?"

No answer. The man was still holding the horns of the cow, looking darkly to the ground, and the woman stared upon her husband.

"Well, then," exclaimed the physician, "there is nothing to be expected; we lose our time. Let us sit down on this log, and make a general assault upon our ham and crackers."

The guide gave us a significant nod, and shyed up to the woman, to whom he spoke urgently, yet without obtaining a syllable in reply.

"Woman!" cried the doctor, "something must have happened to you or your family, that grieves you. We are strangers, but not unfeeling. Tell us what it is? Perhaps help may be found."

The man looked up, and the woman shook her head.

"What is it?" said I, approaching her; "what afflicts you so? Help is often near, when it is least expected."

We could clearly perceive that something must have happened here, that was painful and afflicting. A trifle could never strain so terribly the nerves of these hardy people.

Without saying a word, the woman stepped up to the guide, took from him a turkey and the ham, and went back into the house.

We followed her, and entered the room. After having sat down around the table, we brought forth our bottles. The man fetched some glasses, and took a seat near us. We filled the glasses, and entreated him to join us; but he declined obstinately our invitations. At last we got tired of wasting our entreaties upon him. Our company, as has been remarked, consisted of ten young men. Two bottles had already been emptied, and we were becoming rather lively, when our host left his place by the chimney, and stepping up to the table, said:

"Gentlemen! you must not think that I am a rude man; but I am obliged to tell you, that I do not permit noise in my house. It is no house for laughing, I assure you, by Heaven!"

And after having spoken thus, he sat down again, leaned his head on both hands, and fell again into his former apathy.

"We beg pardon," I replied; "but, indeed, we did not think that our merriment would offend you."

The man made no reply, and thus passed half an hour in whisperings and conjectures.

At last a negro girl set the table. After many ardent invitations to join our meal, the host and hostess sat down with us. He now tried our cogniac, and drained a glass at one draught. We filled it up, and he again emptied it; and again the glass was filled. After the third glass he sighed heavily, and it was visible that the man began to feel easier.

"Gemmen!" he commenced, "when I met you as you were chasing my cow, you must have thought me sullen and rough; but now I can see whom I have before me. Ah! that man!—When I meet him, I will send a bullet through his body; and I pledge myself he shall not steal a boy again."

"Stealing boys?" exclaimed I. "How, has one of your negroes been stolen?"

"One of my negroes, man? My son, my only son!—my lawfully begotten son! her child!" pointing at his wife; "our boy is stolen!—our boy, the only one that was left us, of five children whom the fever carried off. A boy as hardy, as cunning, as handsome, and as smart as any boy ever born in the backwoods. We settled here in this wilderness; we worked hard day and night; endured pains and dangers, hunger and thirst, heat and cold. And for whom? Here we are now alone, abandoned, childless, inconsolable, praying and weeping, cursing and groaning. Nothing avails, all is in vain. Oh, I shall go mad! If he were dead!—If he were lying behind yon hill, by the side of his brothers and sisters, I would not grumble. The Lord gave him, the Lord taketh away! But, oh, Almighty —"

The man uttered a shriek—so frantic, so terrible, that the negroes, women and children, rushed into the room, while our knives and forks fell from our hands. We gazed at him, unable to speak.

"God alone knows!" he continued, and his chin fell heavily on his breast; but suddenly he recovered, and poured down one glass after another.

"And how was this terrible theft committed?" was our inquiry.

"The woman," said he, "can tell you."

She had left the table, and was sitting at the bed-side, groaning and weeping. It was indeed a shocking scene. The doctor got up, and conducted her to the table; we all looked at her, eager to hear her explanation of this extraordinary occurrence.

"Yesterday it was four weeks," she be-

gan; "Mr. Clarke was in the woods, and I in the cornfield, to see that the servants properly attended to their work. I stayed a good while with them, and it was already eleven o'clock by the sun; the morning was as fine as the valley of the Mississippi had ever seen, and as you know the servants don't like to work if they can help it, I stayed with them. Then I thought it would be time to go home and cook the dinner for the people, and home I went. I know not how it was, but when I was passing through the field, it seemed to me as if a voice cried: 'Run as fast as you can,' and so I did. Something like fear and dread came over me, and I hurried with all my might. Coming home, I saw Cesi, our black boy, sitting on the stoop of the house, and playing by himself. Still I had not a thought what was to come. I went into the house and into the kitchen. On looking around for kettles and pans, I thought of my Dougal. I left the pans and ran to the door, when Cesi met me. 'Missi,' said he, 'Dougal is gone.' 'Dougal gone? Where is he gone, Cesi?' 'I don't know,' said Cesi; 'he left with a man who come on horseback.' 'With a man who came on horseback!' cried I; 'for mercy's sake, Cesi, where can he have gone to? What is this?' 'Don't know,' rejoined Cesi. 'And with whom is he gone, Cesi? Did he go willingly?' 'No; not willingly,' replied Cesi; 'but the man jumped off his horse, then he put on Dougal first, jumped on behind him, and rode away!' 'Rode away!' replied I; 'and you don't know the man?' 'No, Missi, I do not.' 'Did you not know, Cesi,' said I, 'whether the man was black or white?' 'I do not know,' answered Cesi. 'Did n't you notice his face, Cesi?' I continued. 'He had a red flannel shirt before his face,' was his half-weeping reply. 'Good, dear Cesi, don't you know how the man looked?' 'He had a coat and a horse,' replied Cesi. 'And you don't know his name, Cesi? Was it neighbor Symmes, or Banks, or Medling, or Barnes?' 'No!' Cesi screamed. 'Gracious God!' I cried; 'what has become of my poor child?'

"I ran forward; I ran back, I ran to the woods and the fields; I searched and I cried. The more I cried, the greater became my fear. At last I hurried to the servants and brought Cesi's mother. I thought it might be possible for her to learn something more from her child. She came to the house with me, and inquired of the boy how the man looked. She promised him cakes, new pants, a new jacket, anything—the boy cried, but he could say no more. Then

Mr. Clarke came in." Here the woman concluded her part of the touching narrative.

"When I came in," continued the man, "the fright of my wife was so great that I instantly perceived some great misfortune must have happened. Little did I imagine its awful extent.

After I had heard the whole, I told her, by way of consolation, that one of our friends or neighbors had taken the child away—but I did not believe it myself; for who, of all my neighbors, would have taken such a foolish liberty with my only child? I certainly would not have thanked him for it. I examined Cesi once more, and inquired again how the man looked? whether he had on a blue or black coat? 'A black one,' he replied. 'What color was his horse?' 'Brown,' answered the boy. 'Which way did he go?'—the boy pointed to the large swamp.

"I immediately sent all my negroes, men, women, and girls, to all my neighbors around, to search for my boy, and to inform them of what had happened. I myself took my way along a path, where in fact I found traces of a horse's feet. I followed these traces to the bayou, where I lost them. The man, with horse and child, had got into a boat—had, perhaps, gone over the Mississippi—perhaps gone down the river on the other side: where he landed, God only knows! He might have come on shore ten, twenty, fifty, nay, a hundred miles below. My anxiety now became horrible! I rode toward Hopefield—nothing had been seen or heard of my child; but all the men of the town mounted their horses to assist me in the search for my boy. All my neighbors came; and we searched a whole day and night—nothing, nothing, could we find! Nobody had seen my boy—nobody had seen the man who took him away.

"We searched the forest for thirty miles around my house. We traversed the Mississippi; went up to Memphis, and down to Helena and the Yazoo river—nothing was to be seen or heard. We returned just as we had gone—no trace, no sign!

"Returning home, I found the inhabitants of all the country around at my house. We once more set out, and searched the forest through and through. I had neither rest nor repose. Every hollow tree, every bush was searched—deers, bears, and panthers we found in abundance, but not my boy. On the sixth day of this terrible life, I returned home. My house had become a den of horror; to me everything became disagreeable and disgusting.

"My flesh was lacerated, my bones were bruised, but my mind was by far more afflicted than my body. I was sick all over and went to bed; when on the second day one of my neighbors visited me, and told me that he had just been informed at Hopefield, by a man from Miller county, that a stranger had been seen in the streets of New Madrid, answering to the description of the kidnapper of my son. It was said that the man wore a blue coat, and that he had a brown horse, and carried a boy on the saddle before him. I forgot my sickness, and my bruised limbs. I bought a fresh horse as I had ruined mine in the pursuit. I followed the man, rode day and night, three hundred miles to New Madrid, and on arriving there, I saw, with painful emotions, the man, the horse, and the boy. It was not my child. It was a man from New Madrid, who had been returning with his boy from a visit in Miller county. How I came home, I know not. Not far from Hopefield, I was found by some persons who brought me home. I was sick for a fortnight and out of my senses.

"Meanwhile, my neighbors had published the horrid deed in all the papers of Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi, Missouri and Louisiana; I had ridden with my friends thousands of miles—All in vain!—No!" he cried with a heart-wrenching groan; "had my child become the prey of a bear or panther, it would afflict me, deeply afflict me; it was my only child. But, gracious Heavens! stolen! My son, my poor child stolen!"

The man ran about the room with clasped hands, weeping like a child. Even the woman was not so woefully overcome by grief.

"When I go to work," he continued, weeping, "my Dougal stands before me, and my hands hang down stiff and heavy, as if they were of lead. When I go to bed I put his bed before ours, and I call him—but no Dougal is to be seen. Dougal stands before me whether I am awake or asleep. Would to God I was dead! I have cursed and blasphemed, sworn and prayed, wept and groaned—but all—all is in vain."

I have seen many sufferers, but never one in whose heart bitter grief was so deeply settled as in this backwoodsman. His grief was indeed boundless. We tried to console him—to inspire him with some hope; the man's eye continued to stare vacantly—I doubt whether he understood a single word of what we said.

We, ourselves, were so overwhelmed by

compassion for his condition, that we could hardly utter a word.

We left soon afterward, shook hands with the unhappy couple, and promised to do all in our power to find some traces of this mysterious and horrid deed, and if possible, to help them to recover their child.

I had often recollected the poor father, and in connection with my friends, had used my utmost endeavors to discover the originator of his misfortune, but all our exertions were in vain. The robbery of the child circulated in all the papers, and became the reigning theme of conversation at all parties, and in every family; rewards were offered, arrests made, but not the slightest trace could be detected.

Six weeks had elapsed, when business brought me to Natchez; where I arrived on a pleasant afternoon in January. I had just left the steamboat, and was walking with a friend from the lower town up the vast lime hill into the upper town, when a confused noise saluted our ears. Coming farther up, we saw an increasing mass of people, standing before the house of Justice Burr. We hastened forward, to see what was going on.

The multitude consisted of the better class of the society of Natchez—men, women, and children, but principally the first. Fear was expressed in every face, and a compassion, which strangely contrasted with the usual noise of such crowds. I observed mothers pressing their children instinctively to their bosoms, and, embracing them convulsively, as if they feared they would be taken from them. On inquiry, I was informed that the robber of the child had at last been discovered; or at least, a man had been arrested, who was strongly suspected of the robbery of the son of Mr. Clarke, of Hopefield county.

Heartily rejoiced at this news, which promised at last to throw some light on this fearful violation of the laws of nature, I tried to press forward, but the ladies had taken so strong a position, that I could not possibly accomplish my object. It was not only a most interesting case for ladies; but to every member of society, this terrible violation of the laws for the protection of persons and property, was of the most intense interest.

We waited there about two hours, while the crowd constantly increased. All the windows were crammed full of heads.

At last the door opened, and the prisoner between two constables, and followed by the sheriff, came out of the house to be conducted to prison.

"That's him," muttered the women, with hoarse, hollow voices and pale faces, pointing to the man who was passing through this living street; at the same time they pressed their children closer to their breasts.

And truly, if external appearance betrays the interior man, this was the child's robber. His face was the most repulsive I had ever seen;—a churlish, obdurate, stupid, malicious physiognomy, with a dark, fiendish, and sneering expression. On beholding this face, one naturally experienced a feeling of suffocation. His gray eyes were bent to the ground, and only an occasional glance, with a most fiend-like expression, fell on the assemblage, as they pressed their children more closely in their embrace. It could be seen at once that he was an Irishman. He was above the middle height; his face had an unclean, grayish look; his cheeks were hollow, and his lips uncommonly large. The whole man had a wild and disgusting appearance. His dress consisted of a blue coat and pants, both very much worn; a round, high, shabby hat, and very old shoes.

The impression made by his appearance, on the multitude, seemed to be painted in their pale faces. All looked at him with a long, terribly hopeless stare, as he walked toward the prison.

"If this man stole the child," murmured some, "then it is lost."

As soon as the crowd had dispersed, I hastened to the justice, who gave me the following explanations:

About four weeks after our excursion into Hempstead county, Mr. Clarke received a letter, signed with the name of Thomas Tutti, and post-marked "Natchez." The father was therein informed, that his son was still alive, that the letter-writer knew of his whereabouts, and that, if he, Mr. Clarke would inclose a fifty dollar bill in his answer, the place of his boy's confinement should be made known to him.

The writer further requested, that Mrs. Clarke should come alone and unattended to the denoted place; that she should bring with her two hundred dollars more, and that after the payment of this sum, her son would be given up to her.

The unfortunate father had hardly received this ray of hope, when at the advice of some friends and neighbors, he dispatched a letter to the postmaster of Natchez, informing him of the whole affair, and requesting him to detain any person who should make an inquiry for the answer. Four days after the receipt of this commu-

nication, the above Irishman presented himself at the post-office window, and inquired whether a letter for "Thomas Tutti" had been received. Under the pretence of looking over the letters, the postmaster detained the man, and sent for a constable, who, already instructed about the affair, immediately hastened to the spot and arrested the inquirer.

On his examination it was found, that he had lived for some time in and about Natchez, and that he tried to establish a school there. But as he could not give a satisfactory account of himself, and as his behavior otherwise appeared so exceedingly strange and remarkable, he did not succeed, and the few persons who had intrusted him with the care of their children, soon took them away.

At this time he called himself Thomas Tutti. Nevertheless, he now denied that such was his name, or that he had written the letter, which certainly had been written by a practiced, though not a masterly hand. On this investigation it also appeared, that he was perfectly acquainted with the roads and paths between Natchez and Hopefield, as well as with the path leading from the latter place to the house of the unfortunate father; and with the bayous, swamps, and rivers, their depth and channels. There was consequently sufficient evidence against him, and, on the fact that he inquired for the answer to the extorting letter, he was committed. The father of the stolen child was at the same time made acquainted with the proceedings.

Five days afterward, the unhappy father arrived with the negro boy. The whole town showed the greatest sympathy for the distressed father. A second inquiry was commenced, and all the most eminent counsel were present and volunteered their services. The former depositions of the Irishman were taken as basis to the evidence, and efforts were made to elicit something from him about the place where the boy was confined; but he met every question with sullen silence.

The negro boy did not recognize him. At last he insinuated, that the mere hope of extorting money from the father, had induced him to write the letter. But as soon as this was taken down on the evidence, he turned to the father with a fiendish sneer, whispering to him: "I will still make you more miserable than you can ever make me." At the same time, he mentioned to him the place where he could find the clothes worn by his son.

The father set out in company with a constable for the place, found the clothes

and returned to Natchez. The accused was again brought before his judges, and after many contradictory stories, he at last asserted that the child was still alive, but that, if he was kept any longer in prison, the boy would be exposed to starvation.

Nothing could induce him to give any further explanation.

The time of the quarter-sessions had meanwhile arrived. An enormous multitude had assembled. Everything had been tried, even promises of liberty and rewards were offered to him: the man kept an obstinate silence. There were strong suspicions, but no evidences of his having been an active partner in the robbery. The most eminent lawyers were of opinion that the desperate man, driven by want, had written the letter only in order to extort money. For this offence, and as a vagrant, he was committed to prison for several months.

Yet this verdict of the jury was far from satisfactory to the judge or the advocates. So mild are the laws which the free citizens of this country have imposed upon themselves—so humane their spirit, that even this foreign scoundrel escaped the punishment, which every one from his inmost heart wished to see inflicted on him. There was, in reality, something fiendish in the glowing scorn of this man—in the delight he seemed to feel at the affliction of the unhappy father, and at the harrowed feelings of the multitude—something so unnaturally fiendish, that no one could forbear to shudder on looking at him. The coolest lawyers confessed that they felt a burning anxiety to fathom the secret, and that words were wanting to express fully their feelings of indignation and horror. In a word, the disgust which he excited was universal.

The inhabitants of Natchez, especially of the upper town, are, as is well known, a most respectable class of people, and stand high in a political and literary point of view. But on this occasion their patience gave way, and the warmth of their feelings led them to perpetrate a deed, which can only be excused by their horror of the crime. On the supposed perpetrator of that crime they themselves inflicted a summary punishment. Without any previous arrangements, they met in the night on the 31st of January, with the intention of setting aside for once the lenity of the laws, and conducting a more effective and less formal trial of the prisoner. Some of the most respectable citizens took him from his cell, and several strong negroes were supplied with cow-hides. These

latter were now put in play upon his back. At every blow the strength of the executioners seemed to increase. A long time the prisoner kept the most obstinate silence; at last, however, the pain became too great, and he promised a full confession.

"In a town, about fifty miles above Natchez, on the Mississippi," such were his words, "lives a family, the head of which can indicate where the boy is concealed."

The sheriff had, of course, been absent from this specimen of flogging by Lynch-law, and had, without disapproving of the affair, pretended to know nothing about it. As soon, however, as he learned the result of the illegal act, he set out the same night, in company with the father, for the designated place.

They arrived there early next morning, and found a very respectable family of backwoodsmen, who knew of the robbery, but nothing more. The mere suspicion, that they could possibly have been privy to, or participants in this cruel act, seemed deeply to wound these honest folks. The prisoner, as he had often done before, had only trifled with their credulity.

Ardent and disappointed hope again laid the father on a sick bed. For some days he lay struggling between life and death. The public had become tired and careless—the pain was over. The prisoner's term of imprisonment had meanwhile passed. During this time everything had been tried for the purpose of eliciting a confession from the Irish rascal, but in vain; a scornful laugh was his only answer. It was impossible to detain him longer, and on the charge of child-robbery, he was, on a *nolle prosequi*, set at liberty. It had been suggested to the father, that it would be best to enter once more into a negotiation with the robber.

Both parents fell at the feet of the monster, who turned coldly from them, and whispered to the father: "You would have made me miserable; be so now yourself."

The unhappy man jumped to his feet, and signified to the discharged prisoner that he must go with him. They crossed the Mississippi. Behind Concordia, the father again entreated the Irishman, once more, to tell where his son was concealed, threatening, that if he did not confess it, he should not escape him alive.

The Irishman inquired how long a time he would give. "Thirty-six hours!" was the answer. For a little while the villain walked on with the parent, as if lost in thought; he then suddenly threw himself

on the father, snatched a pistol from his belt and pointed it at his forehead.

The weapon missed fire; now he rushed quickly toward a bayou which was near them, but hardly had he touched the water when it closed upon him, and he sank to rise no more. An hour afterward, his corpse was found.

Of the unhappy father's son nothing has ever been heard.

CHAPTER IV.

AN ARRIVAL TOO LATE.

At last, these well known banks of our childhood's home arise, with their immense wreaths of live-oaks, so beautifully festooned with those large vines in whose shades we had so often wandered. Cæsar grew more impatient, and his wild and joyous outbreak of spirit, drives half of our company from the deck. The noble animal had behaved exceedingly well, during the first eight days of our passage; for, when we left Florence, he was so tired that he could scarcely move a limb. But he had now recovered, and his life and animation is indeed troublesome. For the last hour I had to watch him in his stall, and soothe him, lest the madcap should break out, to the great alarm of two ladies who were standing on the deck muffled up in their shawls, and dissatisfied with everything and everybody.

It was evident that nothing could be done with Richards. He had not uttered a word since an early hour in the morning; searching with his glance the left banks of the river, he feasts always in imagination on the joy his arrival will create. A visit to his parents had separated him for four months from his home, and from his charming wife; and he had hardly been six months married, when he was required to depart. Happy man! how sweet is home to you! a place of repose for the weary, a paradise of all earthly joys, where a being whose heart beats in unison with thine, longs for your coming; when the bosom of a beautiful woman, whose mind is congenial with yours, heaves higher as your footsteps approach.

Unfortunately, I have never been allowed to participate in such joys. My home is in the hands of strangers, only the cold hearts of hirelings and slaves await my arrival. The thoughts of my loneliness never awoke such bitter feelings within

me as at this moment; it was as if piercing swords had penetrated my body.

Cæsar broke forth into a loud neighing, and pawed and stamped upon the planks. Even a horse has a home: he remembers well the avenue of China-trees with their small and glittering leaves, and the thousands of flowers and berries, shining in the morning sun as if charmed into existence by the breath of a magician. His salute is responded to by a whole pack of dogs. The whole plantation is in a state of excitement and uproar.

First, a couple of coal-black woolheads look out from behind the orange-grove, and disappear just as quickly; then a pack of barking dogs appear, which seem to be scenting something afar. These bring forth a crowd of boys and girls, who without the least ceremony jump upon their backs, and are instantly tossed off again. Behind these follow their grown-up brothers and sisters, and after them the whole kindred of Ham.

But now a most lovely creature hurries through the door, down the terrace, and toward the avenue, evidently expecting some one by the steamer. She seems still in doubt; it is easy to perceive with what lively impatience she looks toward the boat as it bends its way to the shore, much too slow for her anxious spirit. How is she tripping to and fro! as if she would speed the boat by her own impatient movements. It is Clara, the charming wife of my friend. Happy fellow! a tear is trembling in his eye, as he observes this beloved half of himself, and as he meets her longing look. Thrice she had come out of the arbor; now she appears for the fourth time, running to the shore and back again, as if impatient and despairing at the slowness of the vessel. At last she has touched the shore—the gangboard is thrown out, and Richards hurries, flies to the land; his wife hastens to meet him, and in a moment she is clasped in his arms! Then she conducts him with returning bashfulness to the fragrant and secluded grove.

My eye followed the joyous couple, and then turned to my other companions, who, silent and almost with reverence, looked on this beautiful picture of the reunion of the two loving hearts. Even the rough boatmen were affected; no coarse joke, no vulgar laughter proceeded from their lips.

I felt myself deserted and alone; but finally shaking hands with the captain and the passengers, I ordered Cæsar and my gig to be brought to shore, and followed after them myself—the faithful dogs jumped barking and yelling around me, as if

they thought that their master, in the outburst of his love toward his dear wife, had forgotten to bestow on them a friendly welcome. And with them came a dozen woolheads of every age, from the two-years old piccaninny up to the grown-up wench.

The young negroes crowd, holding up their hands in a suppliant attitude, as if they would have something to place between their teeth, that glittered in such strong relief with their black faces. They shall not need so small a gift long; 't will make them happy for hours. Yes, happy are ye that do not feel the bitterness of your lot! who have not yet felt the horrors of perpetual slavery! thrice happy, if fate permits, to pass all your days in ignorance thereof!

Strange as it may seem, the appearance of these joyful creatures, who were gambolling around me, restored my temper. It is time that I should look for my friends; but the first moments of meeting are so treasured and so holy, that I must not intrude. How many things might they have to tell each other that is not fit for the ear of a friend. I walked up the steps, and waited on the terrace. I soon stepped to the door; it almost seemed as if I was not wanted. Again I stop. At last my hand falls on the knob, and the door opens. I see them both arm and arm, without myself being seen or remarked. I was about to retreat; but no, such a sight I shall not often see again. Now they stand in each other's embrace. It is a brilliant pair! He, the real image of Apollo—with aquiline nose, fiery black eyes, from which you cannot withdraw your gaze; for with each glance you look deeper into a soul, a little proud and selfish, but manly and firm.

His wife was the model of a Hebe, with an expression maiden-like, yet winning, as she stood there infolded in his arms, looking up to him, with a beautiful, confiding face, her whole frame trembling with joy. I wish I had not interrupted them. They did not see me though; they had too much to see at themselves. His eye seemed now to seek another object; he looks around the room, and blushing, she takes his hand and leads him to the door, through which Polly comes bounding with an angel on her arm.

Thrice happy! he threw himself on the poor girl like a maniac, and she almost dropped the dear burthen. He caught the child, took it into his arms, and began to dance through the room, a step that would have been applauded by an anchorite, if a heart and not a bag of dollars beats on his left side. Again he embraced his wife;

and now the lovely pair heaped so many marks of their paternal affection on the new citizen, that he at last was obliged to protest in a loud scream.

If ever a scene could make me regret my bachelor's life and change the current of my thoughts, it occurred within fifteen minutes, before my own person excited any attention. I was still shaking hands with Clara, when Mappa, the coachman, entered the room.

"The horses are harnessed," announced the black squire.

"You do not know yet," whispered she, "that she leaves to-day, in the Helen McGregor, for the north. I was just about bidding her farewell, but your arrival has changed her intention, and she will excuse me when she hears of it."

"She will not," said Richards. "No, we must see her. She would never pardon us."

"But you are so tired?"

"By no means; and even if I was, that would not detain me from seeing the intimate friend of my Clara, to whom I owe so much."

"Yes, and you had a good intercessor," she replied, "and if she had not always spoken of you, heaven knows what would have happened. But," she continued in a low tone, "I paid you back in the same coin: she is promised."

"You wrote to me about your aunt's plan," replied Richards, also in a low tone. "I hope the affair has not progressed far."

"It has—but you will hear. You have got half-an-hour to dress, and another half-hour for luncheon; the steamer is expected at four o'clock."

"And what shall we do with Howard?" he whispered; "you know of his aversion to the aunt. I doubt whether you can do anything in this matter."

"He don't like the aunt?" she whispered. "You really astonish me; that is altogether new; and she is his greatest admirer. I should almost think she had—"

"There is the knot."

She mused awhile; then, nodding with her head, said slowly, "He must go along with us."

With these words she came up to me. I had not lost a word of their conversation, and I now thought to myself, "Come, come, you shall not find me so stupid as did Mr. Shifty of witty memory."

"You will certainly be of the party to aunt's?" said she with a coaxing smile, taking my hand.

"Not this time," was my answer; "I am thankful that we are in port again."

"Not even if I should introduce you to a beauty, highly endowed, like a certain Mr. Howard?"

"Thanks for the compliment; it is a poor one."

"It is only four miles."

"Too much, if it were only as many rods."

"How can you be so dry and crusty? A real old bachelor. Would you not go, even if I should tell you to whom I shall introduce you?"

"No, my dear lady."

"Your obstinacy is provoking, indeed! Would you not go then, to see Emily Warrens?"

"You—go to see Emily Warrens?" I interrupted quickly. "How? I thought she was in New Orleans?"

"How suddenly the wind changes," remarked Clara dryly, turning to her husband.

I looked at them, as if I did not hear her; but the bait had taken. And no wonder, after such scenes as I had just now witnessed. Richards had always spoken in terms of high praise of this Emily; he who was so cool, so temperate, so avaricious in his praise of the fair sex. Was it a wonder that my curiosity awoke interest? But then the unfortunate Mistress Houston, with her persecuting—hem—I cannot call it—love. What is to be done with this long-legged thing? slim, lank, with projecting cheek-bones, a regular Scotch face, and a nose flat, like our broadhorns, or arks? She is the most disgusting creature that ever wore petticoats. But certainly she has some good points. She is very rich, very respectable, of course, and very rational. Her cotton is almost as good as Sea Island—but her negroes! Potemkin did not reign with sterner despotism over the bearded subjects of her Muscovian majesty, than the bilious Mr. Twang over the heads of these poor wretches. And then her features, especially when they express hatred or scorn, or when a fellow comes before her at the wrong time. Her whole being shows such passion, at such a moment, that she is ugly—almost detestable.

"And is Emily in such hands?" I asked myself more than ten times. "I have returned home principally from love to her: she has begun to tickle my curiosity, and now, when I am about to become acquainted with her, she is going on a journey into the wide world."

I felt very strangely. Fond of girls as

I was, I had the belief that at last I should never have one. I thought and thought, forgetting that Richards and his wife were already standing five minutes before me, casting significant looks at each other.

"I see, now," she began, with a strange smile, "you cannot be moved."

"Oh! to oblige you, I will go; but indeed, only to oblige you."

"It would indeed be too much, to expect such a sacrifice," replied the two matrimonial allies, with a laugh which placed me in a very ridiculous light indeed.

In half an hour we had finished our toilet, in half an hour more our luncheon; and, conquered by female diplomacy, we took our seats in the carriage.

It is not very interesting to sit in a carriage, with a couple married within twelve months, especially if the one partner has been absent during four of them. The young people have so much to tell each other, so many secrets—in short, the most philanthropic are so economical of every moment, and so selfish, that, for a third person, nothing is left but to hold one's tongue. I could not amuse myself even with my young fellow-citizen, who was lying in Polly's arms: he had to pass to and fro so often, that it would have been in vain to attempt engaging his attention. So I was compelled to gaze upon the Mississippi.

Yes, it is a glorious sight, this Mississippi, at all times, but especially when, as now, it is brimfull! It is said to be deepest here, and I am of that opinion myself; for further down are the bayous, which take away much of its water. The stream has risen about ten feet, and the current is very rapid. I like to see it bank-full, this majestic father of the streams, or, as the Indians call it, the *endless* stream; and I always feel some dissatisfaction when I see it at low water, with its clay banks fifty or sixty feet high. The heat becomes excessive, and the musketoes seem to scent our blood: already three have stung me.

We have just passed a third plantation. A fine sight, this house with its twenty huts, buried in a forest of China, tulip, orange, fig, and lemon-trees; especially the first look beautiful, with their white flowers and yellow berries, which cover the whole crown of the tree, and which will become red in a few weeks, when they look like millions of brilliant rubies, to the joy and destruction of the robins. Thousands of these true-hearted little birds swarm in the dewy fall mornings around these trees, drown their little cares in the juice of these berries, tumble from side to

side, and caper oddly—the loveliest drunkards that the world ever saw.

As we were driving down along the broad bank, with the Mississippi on our left, the white fences of the immense cotton plantations on our right, and behind us the colossal cypress and cedar forest, the intense gaze almost made me dizzy; and houses, fields, and woods, seemed to be flying toward the Gulf of Mexico. Richards's voice finally awakened me from my reverie; we had arrived on Mistress Houston's plantation.

So we shall finally see this wonder of female perfection, to whom so much homage has been paid. A row of at least twenty brilliant gigs, and the same number of saddle-horses, stand in the yard under the trees. We alighted, looked over our dresses, and replaced what the short ride had put out of order, and ascended the stoop. The hall was crowded with servants, the saloon crowded with guests, who came all, to exchange adieux with the northern beauty. But neither she nor Mistress Houston were present. I could not help laughing at the droll importance with which my friend's wife pointed out a door, and then with a dignified, lovely smile disappeared through it. At the same time a new trouble overcame me. There is nothing more disagreeable than to hurry to a place, on the wings of longing, to count every moment of delay, and then to be forced to patience; or, what is worse still, to meet the faces of about a dozen old acquaintances, whom you have not seen without a heart-ache, for the last eighteen months; and now to be obliged to look at them with eyes beaming with joy, and to repeat for half an hour, how very glad you are to see them again, and how fine the weather is. But it cannot be avoided, and so we began to make our tour all around; first, to the ladies, of course, and then to the gentlemen, after the true Yankee fashion.

I had already dispatched the tenth individual, when suddenly Richards took my hand and conducted me to an elderly gentleman, who was standing at the upper end of the drawing-room. Unfortunately, the ceremony of introduction was finished so quickly, that I missed completely the name of the respectable personage. He was very glad, so said his formula, to make the acquaintance of a man, of whom his friends told him so much that was praiseworthy.

I bowed dutifully; but my bow must have been very stiff. I looked around for Richards; he was gone. I looked at the

gentleman, he at me, and so confusedly that neither of us could find words. I do not know how it came, that every word stuck to my tongue; but he stood before me so stiff and prim, that in comparison a Spanish grandee would have appeared a French dancing-master.

And these serious, dry, sharp features, this pointed nose, with the blue, sunken, piercing eyes—they seemed to dart into me! There was something good-natured, but at the same time unconquerably staring in them. A Yankee of the old school, true to the life. I must have cut a very odd figure standing before him, as, instead of answering, I was measuring his whole frame, as if to take his portrait—observing his powdered hair, his queue, his silk knee-breeches, and his shoes with their small gold buckles, without uttering a single word.

I was about to ask his pardon for not having caught his name, when Ralph Doughby put his hand on my shoulder. I could almost have thanked him for this, though the blow, with his heavy hand was not particularly agreeable. Before I turned round again, the man had bowed and left me alone, doubtless giving me full credit for being a simpleton. Thus it is with bachelors, at eight-and-twenty, when they go to see young ladies.

I had some trouble in finding the coxcomb Doughby, lost as he was behind a shirt-collar twelve inches high, with which he had furnished himself during his New-York tour. Who would have expected this of our Doughby, who, only two years ago, thoughtfully followed his poor negroes, whip in hand? He was too economical even for an overseer. And now he is one of our first dandies, and "goes it" in genuine Lower Mississippi style; drinking his ten glasses of sling, or half as many bottles of Chambertin; playing *ecarté* with grace till midnight, and with the same grace knocking down a wool-head. It would appear that he has made himself, methodically, a man of fashion; and now having accumulated physical and moral strength, he passes for one of us, for he had the prudence to save both, until he had laid aside a little fortune. I should like to know, whether he also came to bid farewell to Emily. Could she have found pleasure in his acquaintance during her stay? That would be no extraordinary recommendation of her sagacity. There must be something of that sort; our good Ralph behaves as if he felt at home.

This thought became annoying to me, as I hurried to my neighbor, who luckily

lived one hundred and fifty miles from me, and complimented him upon the advantageous metamorphose he had made. The *ignoramus* accepts the flattery with seriousness, grows large, and even patronizing. Heaven be praised! he is gone; but who are these crossing the room toward me? as I live, a whole batch of politicians, who have been ruined by the last gubernatorial and presidential election. These good folks firmly believe that the honor of Louisiana is gone, if they are not at the rudder of state. Of the poor Creoles they speak with great contempt, and even bitterness.

I was just about to communicate some political news to these gentlemen, when suddenly the doors opened, and a procession of ladies entered the saloon. First came an unknown person, at Clara's arm; then Mistress Houston and company. But this unknown, it must doubtless be Emily! But what does Doughby want with her? He steps up to her as unceremoniously as if she were his already. And she? I do not know what is the matter with me! Is it surprise, or is it jealousy of Doughby? Things become green and yellow before my eyes. She bows to the company, and speaks to the powdered gentleman; now, she turns toward me. Oh, Jupiter! Mrs. Houston stands already half a minute before me, inquiring after my health; I am staring at Emily, and, what is worse still, I bid the lady welcome in her own house: "I am very glad to see her!" Well, if she is not blind, we shall have a fine story upon the tapis; for to come under the influence of the tongue of this *chronique scandaleuse*, personified, or to make a tour through our twelve hundred newspapers, insures about the same amount of notoriety. And in addition to this, I push her gently aside to have a more complete view of Emily. How firm her step—and yet how soft! No affectation or stiffness is there in her movements, but on the contrary, the sweetest liveliness and yet the most modest grace. She is a little above the middle height, her body a model of symmetry, slender and yet rounded, elastic and yet ethereal! And those beautiful dark-blue eyes, that looked at every one with such an enchanting confidence, as if they would say: *I know you like me.* Oh! I shall never forget those lovely eyes; glancing as they do, just long enough to convince you that you have been found worthy of a glance, but not long enough to inspire you with the shadow of a hope; their maidenly, and tender expression, which from enchanting brightness, changes

imperceptibly into deep earnest, is too much for me. And then the tint of her clear skin, like roses among lilies. Oh! she is indeed the freshest, the loveliest, and most exquisite beauty I have ever seen.

Yes, she is truly a charming girl; never did I see so ingenuous and intellectual a being. That face is worthy the study of a whole life! She speaks to Richards and his wife: her hands are clasped in theirs.

"We have had to wait long for you, Harry," she whispered, fixing her eyes in thoughtful earnest upon him.

"I hope I have not arrived too late," rejoined Richards.

She did not reply, but her bright eyes seemed to moisten and to say, "Yes, too late."

"If I have arrived too late, it is your fault," said Richards, turning toward me.

I stood lost in my reverie. I heard nothing, I saw nothing; only some broken tones reached my tympanum.

"George is dreaming again," said Richards, taking me by the hand and drawing me nearer.

I looked up, and she stood before me in all her indescribable charms.

"Did you hear those heavy complaints that have been made against you, just now?" he inquired. "Those two hundred miles I have had to travel twice, to meet you in your wanderings and bring you home, may indeed cause you a heart-ache."

"Heart-ache?" I demanded; "and who feels it?"

The eye of Emily was resting on me. "Mr. Howard has indeed good reason," said she, "to be proud of the love and esteem of his friends."

The first words which she spoke to me! But what a voice, what tones! What are Garcia's notes to these? What liquid music! and that mouth—how heavenly it opens! And those rows of pearly teeth! I could not look enough at her. I would have given the world only to see those teeth once more; but the sound of two guns was now heard, together with the howling of the negroes.

"The steamboat!" cried Mrs. Houston with her cracked voice.

"The steamboat!" I repeated with fire in my eyes. The old lady looked at me with a sneering and triumphant glance.

"Emily!" said I, and the words died on my tongue—"Emily!" and in the mean time I pressed her hand ardently.

She looked at me almost with astonishment: she must have read in my face what was going on in my heart.

And now the confounded Helen McGregor, hissing like an anaconda, is already heard in spite of the cries of the negroes; and Mrs. Houston, probably to shorten the pain of the last farewell scene, cries louder and louder, "The steamboat! the steamboat!"

But what does this mean? Ralph Doughby rolls up her shawl, pushes the old powdered gentleman aside, just as he would a bale of cotton, throws the silk shawl over Emily's shoulders, almost tearing her lace collar from her neck. So this is what you are about? Well, now I know how I am off, and I am heartily glad of it. What is Emily Warren to me? A beautiful dream, and no more. I awake, and I can now endure it all. She is not my first, and I hope, not my last love. An old practitioner at eight-and-twenty must not cut his throat for such trifles. Poor consolation! During the time these maxims of the rough philosophy of life were passing through my brain, I could have killed in cold blood that same Ralph Doughby.

Yes, he conducted her to the steamboat, and Mistress Houston falls to my lot. Instead of offering her my arm, I took hers, and so we went on. What I said to her I do not know to this day; but it must have been something terrible, because she shrieked aloud.

This disagreeable noise brought me back to my senses, and her poisonous looks, by degrees, cooled my passion. Only a few steps, and we were at the landing-place. Chests, trunks, and a lot of boxes were lying there; nothing was left, then, but to dispatch the proprietors. Adieu must be said once more. My eye was still fixed on Emily, as she hung on the arm of my friend's wife. It seemed as if she did not part willingly with the friend of her early days. The long, long kiss, and tearful eyes bore witness. But now comes Mistress Houston, stately, stiff, and cold, the pure picture of winter embracing spring. Then follow the other ladies and gentlemen; and last of all, Richards and myself. She comes one step nearer; her eye seeks mine; our hands meet; I press hers—perhaps for the last time. But there is not the least pressure in return—and yet her beautiful eyes rest on me. A tear twinkles on her dark eyelashes; a second—she turns—there is now a trembling, almost insensible pressure of the hand—of that most lovely hand. I murmured without knowing it: "Heavens! so I must lose you then, after having seen you hardly for ten minutes!" She looked at me, and then turned with a mild and melancholy

glance, which seemed to say : *yes, we must part.*

But who comes there ? A crowd of woolheads, young and old, children, boys, girls, old men and wenches ; all howling and grinning their farewell, all longing for a last look from this lovely being. She must have been very kind to these poor creatures : none feels more deeply than she. Even their pains, their hard fate, made them anxious to kiss the kind hand which was opened in benevolence—that willingly deigned to pour balm into their open wounds. It is indeed a beautiful sight, to see this excellent being, surrounded by the negroes ; the unexpected homage seems to fill her with pleasant, and yet mournful feelings. But Mrs. Houston nods to her grand vizier, and the poor creatures are frightened back. Another farewell, and she steps on the planks, which take her away from us for ever.

I gaze after her as if lost, while she walks, hanging on Doughby's arm, over the gangboard to the deck, and disappears with him at the door of the saloon.

And now the steam blows, hissing more and more loudly, until finally it is choked off, and the powerful machine moves, first slowly and then with increasing rapidity.

Will she not come out of the confounded saloon and give us a last glance ? Farther and farther the boat speeds, with such an infernal swiftness, as, I thought, I had never seen before.

Ah, now the door opens ; it is a female figure ; she comes to the railing—a handkerchief in her hand ; she waves it. The old gentleman lifts his hat and makes a stiff movement, and now I recognize the old gentleman again. I recollect that when already on the plank turning to me, he shook my hand in a friendly way, and told me, that if ever I should come to Boston, I must regard his house as if it were my own. "Who is that man," I inquired of Richards, "that stands near Emily, and nods his adieu to us in such style?"

"Indeed," rejoined my friend, "you are one of the strangest men ; there you stand and gasp, and forget everything around you, and you do not even observe when people take leave of you. Mr. Warren must indeed think you a 'strange being!'"

"This is—Mr. Warren?" inquired I, pressing my hand on my brow.

"Who else but him ? I pray you to avoid any strangeness in your manner : our aunt has her eyes fixed on you."

This brought me to myself again. She stood before me ; a malicious, mischievous sneer played on her lips. Hardly had

Richards time to whisper to me the word, "Be a man !" when she was at my side, inviting me to dinner with all possible politeness. I was about to answer with a short *No* : but Richards and his wife interfered, and accepted. The old lady looked in my face for a moment, and then turned to the company.

"Be a man only for this once, and do not give yourself up to the scorn of our aunt and her thousand scandalous stories," said Richards. I was about to say, "What do I care for your aunt and her scandalous tongue?" but Richards must have read my soul, and he said seriously and drily : "This rough, passionate, and dreaming behavior, is indeed calculated only to stamp you as the most disagreeable misanthrope. Recollect that you are among your neighbors, and that you must not show your weakness!"

"You are right, indeed," was all I replied. It was indeed high time to return. Already the small-talk among my neighbors had commenced ; already the ladies turned up their pretty noses in derision, and curled their ruby lips. Another hour passed in this way, would have made the disappointed lover the conversation at every tea-party throughout the whole valley of the Mississippi. No, this must not be ; I shall awake to the consciousness of my strength, and forget all these trifles. Perhaps this would not have been so easy ; but while I was still struggling with myself, Mrs. Houston gave me one of her general coup-d'aîls, and this decided me. To show my weakness before this woman would be stupidity and folly ; no, this tongue shall not indulge its favorite sarcasm on me. I should be no better off than the poor rabbit that is swallowed by the moccason snake, which first covers the head and body with disgusting slime, and then swallows its prey more luxuriously. My case would certainly have figured in a dozen country papers or weekly journals, payable by five dollars or four books of pot-pourri of the same nonsense—calfskin and gilding included.

I had now to find the best way of passing the few hours, in order to extinguish the disagreeable impression. Firm resolution to find the solution of this problem, inspired me with power. By and by my good temper was partly restored, and in a short time completely so. How this was brought about, I know not to this day. Was it the disagreeable sneer of Mrs. Houston that metamorphosed me ? or the excess of my despair, at losing for ever a being, who, as my heart told me, would

have made me too happy! Enough, I was in a mood that might almost be called brilliant.

Sparks of wit and fun began to flow from my lips; every word breathed the unbound and free man of the world. Mistress Houston first looked at me doubtfully, then with astonishment; at last she seemed unwilling to believe her own eyes and ears, and Clara tittered, and screwed up her mouth, until she could no longer resist laughing.

All the adventures and obstacles of our voyage were discussed—from the dry Mr. Shifty to the barbecued bull, roasted in his skin and hair, for the celebration of the eighth of January; of which bull, by the way, we had received a complimentary rib. We canvassed at large the character of the shrewd Yankee, who, after picking the earthly remains of his dear wife, hung them up in the chimney to smoke, anxious to sell her, thus pickled and smoked, as a genuine Egyptian mummy to the American Museum; having heard, by the papers, that mummies are a very current article, and often disposed of for their weight in gold. All the odd scenes with which we had met, passed in review, and I described them with a vivacity that kept the whole company constantly in a roar of laughter. Certainly, the whole became more amusing, because he who spoke was not often disposed to make merry; one who, for his own pleasure and that of his circle, contributed his share to the general fund of amusement, without being at all anxious to secure applause.

I was perfectly jovial, and it appeared impossible for me to restrain myself from diffusing gayety around me. Even the tact with which I occasionally interrupted my stories, was calculated to exhibit my gifts in the most forcible light.

Mistress Houston had procured another dozen of champagne, and I love this wine, because it is the true image of the nation, from whose vineyards it comes to us; but I dislike excessive drinking, and to my great satisfaction my forty neighbors were equally temperate. We broke up, after having sacredly promised to meet again at no distant day. Indeed, we parted so merrily, that I even thought Mistress Houston had never looked so lovely before.

"You have done wonders," said Richards, after we were in the carriage, driving back toward his plantation.

"The aunt was laughing," interrupted his wife, "until the tears poured down her cheeks. I believe you can command her at any time. Indeed, you were en-

chanting; and I should never have expected that."

"Then you do not yet know this queer, peevish fellow, and the spirit of opposition that swells within his bosom. Thanks to the sour face of the aunt; it procured us one of the most joyous evenings I have ever spent."

"There, you speak again like a comfortable old English epicure of forty, who loves his good dinner and a joke in the bargain, if it costs him nothing. You know I hate egoism. But tell me now, the particulars about Mr. Warren. Who is he?"

"I hate egoism!" repeated Richards, laughing so loud, that two boatmen on a broadhorn answered him. "I hate egoism! and the question which follows this declaration, illustrates the truth of your assertion. Or is it anything else than a refined egoism, that is hidden under this question? Speak it out freely, poor George; Emily is not indifferent to you?"

"The deuce take you! There they lurk and lurk, and whisper and whisper, I did not know why, until the great secret is finally out."

"*Honi soit qui mal y pense.* Would to heaven I could have expected that," rejoined my friend, and his eye fell honestly upon me. "Yes, she would have been a good wife for you; I told you so always; and travelled hundreds of miles, in order to come in time—but it could not be; and now it is too late."

"Too late?" I repeated, mechanically.

"Yes! she visits Saratoga with her father and Mr. Doughby. She will stay a few weeks at home and then return as Mrs. Doughby."

I knew it; it was as clear to me as the rising sun, as soon as I had seen Ralph throwing her shawl upon her as he would throw a shabrack on a horse. No reasonable doubt could exist any longer; but now I was again in bad temper. Who would not have been?

"You might have spared yourself the friendly trouble of thrusting the arrow deeper into my heart, by making me acquainted with her," rejoined I, bitterly.

"This I certainly would have done, if I could have supposed you to be so childish and romantic, and if I had known the real state of things."

"You did not know it? and still you dragged me there almost by the hair."

"I do not regret that yet," interrupted Richards; "we may hope now to find you firmer. Indeed, this eternal travelling cannot last long."

I looked at him. He had avoided my question, but his wife took up the gauntlet in his behalf.

"Indeed," she said, "who could expect that you, a wandering Jew, should care about the ties of matrimony! But who can depend upon you? the aunt, you know, is born for forming marriages. We took Emily from New-Orleans; the rest you know, or you can guess it."

"And when was this affair brought to a point?"

"Within two weeks."

"Within two weeks!" repeated I—one, two, three times. It was full four weeks since I had met Richards the second time, and at least eighteen days since we were expected by his wife. I thought I might flatter myself that Clara's influence could have delayed her choice until our arrival. All this was passing through my brain, and troubling my mind. I saw clearly that the aunt had been the cause of all.

"Oh, yes; this glorious aunt!" I cried out.

"Is a very respectable lady, Mr. Howard," replied Mrs. Richards; "and she hoped to make the best choice for her niece. I cannot reproach her."

"Certainly not," I rejoined. "I only regret that she does not belong to the Catholic Church. She might then enjoy the hope of being destined one day to embellish in a gilded frame the Cathedral of New Orleans, to the comfort and praise of all her negroes!"

"This was pretty severe—but who can be *always* patient? For me it was impossible; I had to open my heart. To this hint, there was no reply. Richards looked earnestly at me—his wife almost fiercely. A long pause ensued. I looked out again upon the Mississippi, the ships, and the flatboats, from which I heard, in rather pleasant tones, a voice singing "Yankee doodle."

"And Emily—did she patiently submit to her aunt's choice?" inquired Richards. His wife made no reply, but she probably answered him by pantomime.

"I am not astonished at it," she whispered after awhile. "There is nothing noble in his appearance. Even the manner in which he offered her his first present, was somewhat boorish."

"You had better say rude," rejoined her husband in the same low voice. "I would willingly pardon his want of politeness, but the very soul of the man is vulgar, and destitute of all tender feelings. She cannot be happy with him. And so she refused his present?"

"She refused it resolutely and firmly," answered his wife. "Even my request could not induce her to take it. She did not know him enough, and she would not bind herself, without her mother's advice."

"She was right; but I cannot understand how the aunt could advance matters so far."

"You know her fortune makes every nod a law."

"And still she did not help poor Warren?"

She shrugged her shoulders.

I looked up, but returned immediately again to my dull thoughts. And so poor Emily was almost forced to this. Indeed she deserves to be delivered from the hands of this bear.

"I cannot possibly believe that she will take him," I remarked to Richards.

"I prythee, do not harbor any hope," he rejoined. "That is vain. And here, indeed, hope is even more than fruitless."

"And would you have married Emily?" inquired Clara.

"Married?" I replied. "Married?"

This word struck me. An old bachelor of eight-and-twenty is not very easily caught, but here there was no room for evasion.

"Marry?" I repeated. "Yes; I would have married her. From the first moment I saw her, I was willing to do so; she and no other should become the partner of my life. I dare say that I looked through her beautiful soul. I have looked without feeling upon more exquisite beauties. But she!—oh! after a longer acquaintance, she would appear to me equally lovely; for hers is a great, an ingenuous heart. Our eyes and hearts met; her soul lay before me; her noble, firm, clear and beautiful soul! It would be impossible for me to keep a secret from her; each of her thoughts, her wishes, I would guess; I would give myself up to her wholly and without reserve. 'See!' I would say, 'this is my character; these are my faults, and these my virtues—will you be mine? Both shall help me to make you happy.' My respect for the nobleness of her soul would have taught me this language, and accompanied me through life. And on this foundation I would have built her happiness—mine. She is the first being to whom I could show myself altogether such as I am."

Both had listened to me with visible attention.

"And what does Mr. Warren say?" inquired Richards.

"Oh, you know him," she replied.

"Provided he can continue his business and keep a respectable house, he lets everything else go its own way. He only wishes a respectable husband for Emily, who has the power of making her independent for life, without his giving part of his fortune as a dowry.

"Yes, all Yankees are," I murmured, "real, double-distilled Jews, who sell their daughters to the highest bidder just like their barrels of onions, flour or whisky."

I had for the moment forgotten that my friend's lovely wife was of the celebrated Yankee race, and I kept silence. To Richards, who was a true Virginian, I could have said more.

"He is the most implacable foe of everything outlandish, that can possibly exist," he said; "but especially of all that comes from England—a thorough tariff-man. He wrote pamphlets, made speeches, and did everything for the benefit of his hobby. He was laughed at indeed; but nothing could change him. Fifteen years have elapsed since I have known him; he is always the same stiff and stately personage, walking along as straight as an Indian, one pace like the other and every day like the one before it. To his hair and cue, he devotes a systematic attention; and he would prefer leaving his dinner to taking it without being thus ornamented. A great deal of his misfortune arises from his antipathy to all things foreign. He boasts, that since the revolution, he has had nothing foreign on his body. From head to foot he is dressed in American manufactures, and he would rather have paid five times the price when our manufacturers were in their childhood than have taken English goods. Once indeed, like a second Napoleon, he burned a complete English dress which had been given to him as American."

"The man is interesting," said I. "I would not have looked for such patriotic sacrifices in his gray eyes. And still he could tread so closely upon the liberty of his daughter?"

We had arrived at Richards's house. I soon retired to my room. Several letters from my overseer lay before me. It was time indeed to abandon this wandering life.

The supper was excellent, the wines were delicious; still nothing pleased me. My friends were in the best imaginable spirits, especially Clara; but I resolved to be unhappy, and retired early with a bundle of newspapers.

The 'Red River' passes here to-morrow twelve o'clock, on its way to Alexandria; I will go and see how my family fares.

It was nine in the morning, when,

with this intention, I came down stairs in my morning-gown and slippers. I do not know how it happened that I did not take breakfast in my room as usual. As I was passing through the corridor to the dining-room, I heard my name. I stopped; the listener, I recollected, "hears his own shame;" but now I resolved to hear my shame. It was Clara's voice.

"But with Emily, it would never do," she said, in a very soft voice; "you know she has no dowry—and then the eight thousand dollars."

"Yes, he must withdraw them," he rejoined; "he wants them for the first arrangements of his establishment. Her demand would come to me very inopportunistically. We have gained about twenty thousand dollars by the money."

"Just on that account I thought myself justified in not following your hints," she whispered.

"But with the aunt nothing can be done," he rejoined.

"Well, then, let him remain a bachelor. He is a strange fellow, any how. I hardly believe that Emily would have been satisfied with his rhapsodies."

"Indeed!" I murmured, and crept slowly up stairs.

I believe that in all my life I never finished my toilet more expeditiously. I immediately appeared before my friends.

"No, George!" begged Richards and Clara; "you shall not go, you must not go—not in this abrupt way; you must remain with your friends."

I looked smilingly into the face of the Yankees, took my leave good-naturedly, and vanished with a polite bow. At twelve o'clock I was on the way to the Red River steamer, that was lying half a mile below I.—'s plantation.

CHAPTER V.

MY FIRST TOUR ON THE RED-RIVER.

ON my way to the steamer, I recollected my first trip on the celebrated river of the same name, and my spirit became as depressed as that of some wretch, who sets out on his last journey in company with the sheriff. I felt an unpleasant grating in all my sinews, and bones, and a desperate feeling of resistance, not less from within than from without. It was as if something kept me back; a light shivering stole over my body. And yet, it was to my home, to my own house, I was going. But what

nome, what house? It is now nine years since I have been able to call this tusculum mine, and nine years two months since I came into possession of this *freehold of these United States*, as we call it. Five thousand dollars had procured me the honor of being a planter in Louisiana; a 'trifle,' as a dozen of my friends—freeholders—called it, on congratulating me. The forest was worth ten thousand; it ought to contain two thousand acres, with due allowance for fences and roads. A half year before, the newspapers of the west had highly praised those Red-River lands; they were extolled as excellent for the cultivation of sugar-cane and cotton; river-slime sixteen feet deep! Egypt itself was a sandy desert in comparison with this blessed region! The climate! oh! the delicious breath of the soft zephyr, which only breathes in Eldorado or Arcadia, was here to be felt. I was caught in the snare, although I ought to have known how my fellow-citizens of the press are wont to sound the trumpets, when a dozen land-speculators have strengthened their lungs with silver-oil; and now a habitable house, with two negro-huts, is my possession in this fever-pool. The land-speculators assured me that the improvements were worth two thousand dollars, even *between brothers*. It was June when I set out in the aforesaid trim, and as I well remember, with the same antipathy, driven, as fools say, by the power of destiny—or as the wise assert, by the force of circumstances, into which we have foolishly brought ourselves. I was then in New-Orleans; the last sail had disappeared behind Great Bend; my friends had gone either up or down the river, or across the lake.* Nothing was to be seen in New Orleans, but hot low-eyed negresses, without masters or clothes, who ran like jackals, howling through the streets, and sneaking about the bolted or broken doors and window-shutters, particularly in the upper suburb, where the streets were totally vacant and desolate, the houses open, the doors and windows broken, the simoon blowing from Vera Cruz, and no other sounds to be heard than the solemn rattle of hearses, on which two or three coffins were laid, one above the other. It was high time to depart; the yellow fever had celebrated his triumphal procession, and ruled like a victorious hero in a town taken by storm.

I had a convoy of four negroes: old Sibyl was one of them—a jewel such as very rarely is to be found. She had no

fear of the yellow fever—the yellow fever did not dare approach her. Cæsar and Tiber were the two others, and Vitellius the third. We generally give our horses and negroes high-sounding names, by way of exhortation, I think, to our own aristocrats; for be assured, even we are not wanting in *would-be Cæsars*. I had prudently left my gig behind; but instead, brought forth from the coach-house of my friend Banks an enormous wagon, with racks which I had loaded with my all, my furniture, property, woollen covers and axes, rakes and plough-shares, cotton shirts and pots. I sat on the top of all these things, the map of my new sovereign possession in my pocket, as proud as one of those sovereigns of whom some, it is said, are to be found in the world, who do not possess even so large a territory. Whoever saw me, Howard, who, only four months before, headed the dances at H— and T—, amid this world of pots, bottles, parcels, pans, and other utensils, must surely have laughed.

But nobody laughed, neither did any one weep, for tears were then scarce in New-Orleans. One was so accustomed to death, and its frequency had so stifled every feeling, that a tear was an article not very easily to be met with. But even if the yellow fever had not been present, so much good sense prevails among us, that such conduct is viewed as nothing more than a little ridiculous, and the most brilliant beauty will in company with her lover, mount such a dearborn as the country-maid does, together with her dear Tom. And whoever travels in our southern and western States, will view scenes more surprising than fancy ever pictured in the mind of a novelist. A loving married couple—educated in the midst of luxurious abundance—retiring to the solitude of the woods, sometimes purchase a beautiful part of the primeval forest, and there lay the foundation of a new home for themselves and their offspring. One very often sees such cottages, consisting only of a single room and a small kitchen. In the room, their every-day dresses hang down from nails in the walls—dresses made generally by the soft hands of the mistress of the house. Moreover, a saddle and trappings, and sometimes even a harp, may be seen. Perhaps there may also be a piano-forte, and on it the latest numbers of the North-American Review and some Washington papers.

Thus our Johnsons, our Livingstons, our Rensselaers and hundreds, nay, thousands of families, even the Jeffersons and Washingtons, have begun. And happy will it

* Pontchartrain.

be for us if future generations do not view this way of renovating society as too loathsome !

As I have said, I mounted my dearborn, in order to follow such glorious examples, and as quickly as possible to leave the infected New-Orleans, when no steamboat was to be heard or to be seen. Just as I sat myself down among my furniture, Cæsar came with a cloak as good as new, (so he thought at least,) which he had been happy enough to discover in an empty house in the suburb. I seized the fire-tongs and threw it as far from the wagon as I could, to the great annoyance of Cæsar, who was unable to comprehend how one could treat so negligently a thing worth about twenty dollars.

No living being was to be seen as far as the eye could reach, though the whole street, which was straight as a line ; on the right side toward the suburb Annunciation, every building was palisaded with planks, on which public notices were sticking in yard-long syllables, which made "*the infected*" visible at half a mile. It was the proclamation of the mayor—but it was quite superfluous. New-Orleans bore the appearance more of a church-yard than of a town. We had not met five persons, we passed the new Canal street and drove up toward the Levee. At the first plantation, where we stopped to give our animals some forage, the gates and doors were shut in our faces ; and the charitable owner, in order to be liberated from the dear visitors, showed us through the lattices a pair of guns, which deprived us of all desire to trouble any farther the hospitality of M—s.

Cæsar, like the great Roman whose name he bore, was, however, not to be deterred by such demonstrations from overstepping the enclosure and nipping off some dozen ears of corn, with which reward of his daring he treated our horses. A broken pitcher was made use of to fetch water from the Mississippi, and after a rest of half an hour, we continued our journey. Five times, I remember, we sought in the same way for hospitality, and as often were we refused, in the same humane style, until we at last arrived at the plantation of B—s, a friend of mine. We had passed in a glowing atmosphere by more than fifty plantations, each of which looked like a royal villa, but we had not yet seen a human being. Here I hoped finally to find a shelter ; but I was again disappointed.

"From New-Orleans?" asked the voice of my friend, through the lattices of his verandah.

"To be sure," was the answer.

"Then begone, friend," was the friendly reply of the dear Mr. B—s ; who, however, had the politeness to place before the gate an enormous ham and half-a-dozen bottles, but gave us significantly to understand, that he would fain see us drink his health in a glass of champagne under the blue canopy of heaven, and then said farewell. I laughed heartily, ate and drank, rolled myself in my woollen cover, and fell into a sleep, deeper and more refreshing than even the President in the White House probably enjoys.

On the following morning, we set out again on our journey. In Baton-Rouge, we at length obtained, at the end of the third day, night-quarters from a Frenchman, to whose well-lined stomach neither the Muscovites or Mamelukes could do any harm, and who consequently laughed at the yellow fever. Next day we went on board the steamboat Claiborne, the raging paddle-wheels of which dashed quickly through the waves of the Red River, and before evening I was at my domain.

"Madre Santissima !" exclaims the Spaniard in need. What I said, I do not now remember ; only I do remember that my hair stood on end, when I saw with my bodily eyes the so-called *improvements*. The habitable house was a kind of pig-pen, fabricated not even of beams, but of mast-trees, without door, window, or roof. And the fashionable Howard was to live there ? and at a time, when the thermometer ranged between 95° and 100° ! But necessity knows no law. We went quickly to work, and in two days two huts stood there, as passable as any that sheltered a backwoodsman, with the only exception that, when it rained snails, we were obliged to take refuge under the cotton-tree which stood in the neighborhood. Happily, fifty acres were cultivated, and that was something. We planted, and busied ourselves in bringing everything into the best possible order. I planted and ploughed in the day-time ; in the evening I repaired the harnesses, and even holes in my *inexpressibles*. We were very little troubled by visits, as my next neighbors lived twenty-five miles away from me. And thus the first summer passed by. The second went off better, the third still better, and so forth, until it became quite tolerable. Anything can be done ; and if Napoleon ever spoke a true word, it was when he said : "*Impossible—c'est le mot d'un fou.*"

And then a hunting excursion on the savannas of Louisiana or Arkansas !

There is something peculiar in these

boundless prairies that exalts the spirit, rendering it, we might say, as well as the body, energetic and firm. There are to be found the wild horse, the bison, the wolf, the bear, and innumerable serpents, and the trapper excelling all in wildness—not the old trapper of Cooper, who never saw a trapper in his life—but the real one, who could furnish matter for novels, which would inspire with a wild enthusiasm, even the most phlegmatic.

Our civilization, the noblest the world has ever yet seen, has nevertheless borne its own monsters, of which other civilized countries know nothing, and which can grow up only in a land, where freedom is unlimited. The trappers are generally outcasts or outlaws, who have escaped the arm of the law, or those untractable minds, to whom the rational liberty, even of the United States, seems a constraint. Perhaps it is a fortunate circumstance for these States to be in possession of a wilderness where the passions of such persons may fret away their fury in wrestling with nature; because, in the lap of well-regulated society, they would probably cause terrible disturbances. Had la belle France, for instance, possessed this territory during the great crisis of '93, how many of its most celebrated warriors would have died like trappers, instead of spreading horror and desolation among millions of peaceful citizens. Neither Europe nor humanity would probably have lost anything if the names of the great instruments of the all-powerful despotism—of Massena, Vandamme, Davoust, and Sebastiani, and of many others had never been heard of.

These trappers and hunters are to be found from the sources of the Columbia and Missouri rivers, down to the mouths of the Arkansas, and Red River, by all the tributary streams of the Mississippi, which, as is well known, rise generally on the western side of the Rocky mountains. Their existence depends chiefly upon the extirpation of animals, which for centuries have crowded on these flowery plains. They kill the wild buffalo in order to make use of his hide for dresses, and his haunches for their meals; the bears, to sleep on their skins, and the wolves to amuse themselves; and they catch and slay the beavers for the sake of their furs, and occasionally for their tails. For these they receive in exchange, powder, lead, flannel-jackets, shirts and yarn for their nets, and whiskey to keep their bodies warm in the cold days of winter.

They often move about on the plains in droves of a hundred or more together, and

wage desperate conflicts with the Indians; but generally eight or ten live together, united for common defence and common labor—like wild guerillas. Yet there are more hunters than trappers; the real trapper lives generally only in company with one sworn friend, with whom he for a year or often many years divides every toil, every amusement, and every danger. Should one of the comrades die, then the other is the sole heir of the hide—the spoil of the slain bear—and the secrets of the place where the game is to be found, and where the chase is most promising.

What fear of punishment in many cases effected at first, becomes soon an absolute necessity; and irregular, boundless liberty is an enjoyment which few of them would renounce if they even were promised the most honorable and lucrative places in regulated society. Such are the men, who, for years, live on the plains, the savannas, and the meadows, and in the forests of the Arkansas, Missouri, and Oregon Territories, which conceal in their midst enormous deserts of sand and stone, and withal the most beautiful prairies. Snow and frost, warmth and cold, rain and storms, and privations of every kind, have so hardened their limbs, made their skin so thick, like that of the buffalo which they hunt, that the perpetual necessity in which they live of relying upon their bodily strength, breeds in them a self-confidence that shrinks from no danger; a sharpness of sight and a correctness of judgment, of which man in civilized society can form no just idea. The fatigues, privations and toils are often terrible, and we have seen trappers who have undergone sufferings in comparison with which the fabulous adventures of Robinson Crusoe are mere children's play, and whose skin was as thick as leather, bearing more resemblance to the tanned hide of the buffalo than to that of a human being. Only lead or steel could penetrate it. These trappers are wonderful psychological phenomena, thrown into wild, boundless nature, their reason often developing itself in a manner so ingenious, nay, grand, that among some I have observed a genius which would have done honor to the greatest philosophers of ancient or modern times.

Daily, nay hourly dangers, one would suppose, must elevate the minds of these wild men to the Most High; but it is not so. Their hunting-knife is their God; their rifle is their patron saint; and their hardy feet their only trust. The trapper hates mankind; and the look with which he measures the man he chances to meet

in the wilderness, is not so often that of a friendly, white brother, as that of a blood-thirsty enemy; for here, as in civilized society, avarice is a mighty incitement to bloody deeds; and generally, one of two trappers who chance to meet, has to fall by the other's hand. He hates his white rival much more, on account of the valuable beaver-skins, than he hates an Indian; the latter he shoots down as coolly as he would kill a wolf, buffalo, or bear; but the former he stabs with a real fiendish joy, as if he felt that he had delivered society from a great fellow-criminal. The fact, that for years he lives on the strongest possible food, the meat of the bison, and without bread or anything else, contributes much to this inhuman wildness—as in a measure it changes him into a beast of prey.

On an expedition, which we undertook in company with several acquaintances, along the upper Red River, we met several of these trappers, among others an old fellow, so thoroughly tanned and hardened by storm, privation and tempests, that his skin resembled more the shell of a turtle than the cuticle of a man. We had hunted for two days in his company, without observing anything remarkable in him; he prepared our meals, which consisted at one time of a saddle of venison, at another a haunch of buffalo; he knew the cover and the course of game, and scented it nearly as well as the large wolf-dog which never left his side. Only the third morning, we observed something which startled our confidence in our new companion. It was a mass of strokes and crosses upon the stock of his gun, which gave us the first key to the real character of the man. These strokes and crosses were arranged somewhat like the following:

Buffaloes.—No number given, as the amount was probably too large.

Bear, 19.—These were marked with single strokes.

Wolves, 13.—With double strokes.

Red Interlopers, 4.—Marked with four cross strokes.

White Interlopers, 2.—With little crosses.

As our companion was closely examining the stock, endeavoring to discover the meaning of the word "Interloper," the grin which overspread the old fellow's features, attracted our attention. Without, however, losing a word, he attacked the haunch of buffalo which he produced from the skin in which it had been enveloped, and now laid before us. It was a meal, fit for a king, and it made us forget

all our scruples. Suddenly he said with a suspicious smile, drawing his rifle toward himself:

"Look ye, it's my pocket-book; d'ye think it a sin to kill one of these two-legged red or white-interlopers?"

"Whom do you mean?" we asked.

The man smiled again, and rose; we now knew, who these two-legged interlopers were, whom he had marked on his shaft, with as much *sang froid* as if they had been wild turkeys instead of human beings, whom he had shot.

We did not feel called upon or empowered to stand up as judges at a place, to which civilized society and its avenging arm does not reach, and said no more to the man.

These trappers, however, once in several years, return for a few weeks to the abodes of civilized society, when they have a large quantity of beaver skins. Usually they cut down a hollow tree near or at the shore of a navigable stream, pack it with their skins and other property, and then float down for thousands of miles on the Missouri, Arkansas or Red River, to St. Louis, Natchitoches, or Alexandria, where, clad in skins, they stare about the streets, presenting a sight, which often transports the beholder's mind to a primitive world.

But we are now at the steamboat and it is high time, to make an end of these entertaining, or wearisome contemplations.

CHAPTER VI.

A TRIP ON THE RED RIVER.

It was a warm, pleasant morning in June, when I stepped on board a Red River steamboat. The sun burned like an oven; not a breath was stirring, except from the stream, which breathed refreshing coolness from its watery bosom. I once more looked back to the shore, at my would-be-friends, answered their salutes with a "hang ye," and hurried to the cabin.

Still in my ears resounded the words—"Very well, let him vegetate as a bachelor; he is withal a strange fellow." My spleen had almost got me into a quarrel immediately on my entrance into the cabin; for one of my fellow passengers thought I alluded to his honorable self in the phrase of: "Mean, treacherous souls!" which I several times repeated. Really, the cunning, fair Bostonian was not very wrong. I was in fact a fool, to give for the last four years, eight thousand dollars to peo-

ple who played me a most malicious trick, in order to keep them four years longer. I could have gone mad, for my every limb trembled, and I could not rest.

"*Qu'est ce qu'il y a donc, Monsieur Howard?*" was the sudden salutation of an elderly, but respectable looking man: "*Est-ce que vous êtes indisposé? Allons voir du monde.*"

I stared at the strange man who chose to address me so perfectly *sans façon*, and was about to turn my back to him, most haughtily, when he took my hand, and drew me very coolly to the door of the ladies' cabin. "*Allons voir, Monsieur Howard.*"

"*Mais que voulez vous donc?*" I asked the man, rather ill-humoredly.

"*Votre connaissance,*" he replied with a sardonic smile, as he opened the door, and let me look into the interior of the cabin.

"*Monsieur Howard!*" he said addressing two girls, who were just occupied in hanging up a bunch of annanas and bananas against the pillars of the state-room, after the fashion in which they hang up the sons of Erin in Old, and onions in New-England.

"*Mes filles, voila votre voisin! Monsieur Howard!*" They came toward me, saluted me like an old acquaintance, and offered me part of their sweet stores, with as much familiarity as if we had for years eaten at the same table. This is polite, upon my word! I might travel ten years, among my fair country women, without the danger of spoiling my stomach in so sweet a manner. I had to join them; we sat down, and now the girls began to chat and laugh, until, in spite of my ill humor, I could not help chiming in. A very pleasant hour was passed, a second and third would have followed, if my native, stiff, Virginia etiquette had permitted me any longer to enjoy the company of these merry beings.

"We shall take our tea here, Papa!" cried the two girls, as I rose.

And really, I have cause to bless this invitation and my lucky star; for our travelling company was anything but choice. A strange class of people! I almost believed I was in old Kentucky. Drovers and butchers from New Orleans, who were on their way to the north-western counties—half-savage hunters and trappers, burning with a desire soon to see the prairies beyond Nachitoches, and there to civilize the Indians, or rather, swindle them—and peddlers from Alexandria, or thereabouts; these formed the so-called respectable part of our company, and they

were a stolid set, to judge from the thickness of their soles and iron-shod heels.

That thick foliage before us? yes, that is the mouth of Red River! It is festooned with the branches of those immense trees on both banks. What a contrast with the Mississippi, which floats along, broad, mighty, and dark, the living image of a northern conqueror, who rushes forth from his wild mountains with savage hordes, to lay waste half a world. While the Red river—which we proudly call the Nile of Louisiana, with about as much rhyme or reason as a certain shoemaker in Massachusetts called his son Alexander Cæsar Napoleon—creeps though wood and valley like the treacherous, poisonous, and lowering coppersnake. Cocytus, would be a better name.

Here we are, at the entrance of the first bog, through which streams this infernal Red River. It is a gloomy sight this bog, which, formed by the confluence of the Tensaw, the White, and the Red River, offers a mirror of the richest green to the eye. At first sight, this appears like terra-firma, with trees from which roots and grassy mud are pendant in long festoons. You would swear it was an immense meadow, until gradually the swamp-lilies are seen to move, and dark, muddy, brown jaws open between them, uttering sounds, which make a novice shudder. There are hundreds of alligators, shooting, like sixty-pounders upon their prey, through this verdant, poisonous swamp. Their time of breeding has begun, and the hollow, dismal roar which resounds all around, has something really dreadful to the ear and mind. You seem, moreover, to have entered the head-quarters of death—who sends out his arrows in the shape of a thousand fevers.

"Snags ahead!" cried the captain.

We have passed the bog and approach the shore, where a brownish, black-looking couple are leaning against a wood-pile, expecting us. We take in our fuel. My eye followed the group, which pressed across the plank to the shore, when my ear caught a wild laughter, and the words, "fever" and "tallow-face." So soon, I thought, and, that in my close neighborhood, and I stepped ashore. Yes, it was really so; and the victim before me was the poor imperial guard. His skin was already transparent; but this is a transparency terrible to look upon. The color is neither pale nor yellow—a mixture of tallow and bronze, and is called "tallow-face." Around his eyes already shines the white ring, and the eyeball rolls as if

driven about by an internal enemy. Envy, as pictured by Naso of old, is nothing compared with this sight. And yet he seems to be indifferent. "*Monsieur Devigne!*" I called to him; "*comment s'en va-t-il?*" The man stared at me, pressed my hand with the reply of, "*Très bien,*" while an ugly negress pulled me by the sleeve, and whispered with a grin, "Ah, Massa! tallow-face—soon ague cake!"

I pushed back the disgusting, unfeeling wretch, and was just about to speak a few words with the poor Frenchman, when again the captain's voice was heard, calling, "All hands on board!" Poor devil! I thought, as I crossed the gangway, thou hast been spared in the deserts of Egypt, the battle-fields of Marengo and Waterloo, to fall a victim to fever and ague. And instead of pity, a coarse laughter resounds from the deck. It almost seemed as if they felt gay at his approaching dissolution.

What a paradox is man! Had this unfortunate been sent to this, or a similar pestilential place by his superior officers, no gold on earth could have induced him to remain. But he came voluntarily, probably driven from better society by his connection with the negress, and now he falls, perhaps a just sacrifice to his passions. The spot on which his cabin stands, is not even his own property, but for that he cares not. He has cleared a few acres of wilderness, planted some corn and tobacco, the sale of which and of wood, supports him, and might have made him wealthy, had this ugly negress not been connected with him. His cabin stands a few steps back, and before the door a couple of dark-brown imps are waddling in the mud. They look more like pigs than human beings, but they are fresh and hardy, and destined by nature to cultivate this ground. Their parents vegetate only a few years, till "ague-cake" ends their sorrows. By hard labor they have built their hut; in the sweat of their brow they have cleared a little place; but their children reap the benefits of their toil. Born in this poisonous atmosphere, used to these pestilential vapors in early childhood, they are already acclimated, and they grow up like the swamp-rose amid venomous animals and plants, to transmit good health to their children and grand-children. In this way arose the present population of Lower Louisiana, and in the same way, this race will multiply here. The former has long since decayed; they came from all climates, and all countries. Debtors, revolutionists, criminals, exiles, and men who deserved a better fate; all—all found a

grave here; but even in these worthless beings, as we call them in our pride, kind nature shows her motherly care. Yes, what is deemed cancerous by the world—the scum, the dregs of civilized society—she uses to populate this wilderness, and pave the way for the onward march of civilization.

Well, nature means it for the best, yet our frosty, calculating, aristocratic spirit—but silence! and let us return to the young ladies, whose names, as I live, I have forgotten. But here comes my friendly, importunate Creole, and conducts me to his fair daughters. One of them is reading *Guil-laume Tell*, and the other plays so familiarly with a black girl, that Mistress Houston would be apt to get the vapors if she were present.

'As I understand, they are on their return home from the Ursuline Convent at New Orleans, where they were educated, but where they got that searching, commanding glance from, would be hard to guess. Not from the pious sisters, we hope? The eldest is examining my worthy person, with a most discerning look, as if to convince herself, whether the attempt would be worth while. She seems to be about nineteen, and somewhat inclined to *em-bonpoint*. It is really amusing, to observe the cool, comfortable manner in which she first examines herself in the opposite mirror, which stands next me. She glances from head to foot, for the sake of closer scrutiny, and to convince herself whether she can stand the test. Nobody likes to be deceived in so important a business. But I am getting malicious, and I really ought to thank my stars, that I have been thrown among such good people. Really good people, in spite of the coquetting of the parents.

It would fill a catalogue, were I to recount all the items with which they have filled the ladies' cabin. Luckily, they are the sole occupants, and have consequently sovereign power in this temporary territory; otherwise we should have had a war. They carried a schooner-load of lemons, oranges, annanas and bananas, and the old fellow had at least three dozen boxes of Chambertin, Lafitte and Medoc with him. I hope he is no wine-merchant? At all events, he shows taste: he is above common Holland, gin and whisky, whose very names make one sick. Essence of death and vice, these green and brown compositions should be called, concocted by villainous quacks for the perdition and ruin of Uncle Sam; and withal, Uncle Sam is not naturally a *bon vivant*, but rather sober and

temperate. But the unfortunate sons and daughters of Erin! I am sorry to say it, yet the truth must be out—they are the tempters. And the worst of it is, that they will not listen to the good advice which our Temperance Societies are so liberal in bestowing, to keep them sober and steady. No; they will not do this, neither will they read the papers, which are established for the same purpose, at two dollars per annum—that is to say, at two dollars if paid in advance, and three if paid at the end of the year—or not at all.

But it is not polite to rove about thus, and leave the lovely demoiselles alone. We have consequently concluded to take our tea *en famille*. Monsieur Menou, however, sticks to his Chambertin, and I intend to try both. These demoiselles are really charming beings—so merry and lively! Their volubility is unique, and their naïve chatterings might make a misanthrope laugh. Yet there are moments when we are ill-humored—moments when the mind is oppressed by a calm, as enervating as that which follows a West Indian tempest. Our reason, tossed about and lamed by the previous storm, is exhausted; the body itself has lost its power, and the quiet which follows is the most intolerable of pauses—a fatiguing rest. Every object then touches our senses unpleasantly, and our reason lies prostrate, like the vessel which, tossed upon its beam-ends by the mighty waves, recovers its position only gradually, or perchance not at all. I was just in this case. Never before had fate, or rather my self-love, thus belabored me with stroke upon stroke: first, this mad love, then the discovered treachery of my most intimate friend.

We had known and loved each other from infancy; our hearts and even our purses, were open to each other; the difference of our character, only consisted in certain light shadings; in the main points they agreed like two clocks, which only differ in seconds, but agree in hours. And now!—half an hour with this tempting Eve—and friendship and all is gone!

And the best of it is—had I, good-natured fool as I was, not appeared with my eight thousand dollars, Mistress Richards were still Miss Bowstring. I could content myself no longer; I had to seek the open air. The night is starry bright; the river only is covered by a small stripe of fog. Like the hollow beats of the steam engine, it seems to resound in the distance; it is the roar of alligators, mingled with the plaintive notes of the whip-poor-will.

Not a solitary light is seen along the shore, but myriads of glow-worms spreading a magic light upon the cypress and papaws. Sometimes we pass so closely to the shore, that the branches of the trees break, rattling across our boat. To-morrow at this time, I shall rest in my tusculum; so for to-night, let us be satisfied with this little state-room berth! The captain just comes to inform me that our noisy travelling companions have retired to rest. The clock strikes twelve.

And this night! these dreams! It seemed as if all the sorrows of my youth had again came over me, and united into one mighty vampire, had crushed or drawn from me all bodily and mental strength. And this burden became so heavy, that I cried aloud in my sleep, and frightened the whole company. I had shaken off the vampire, and I felt easier and happy. Indeed, if this unamiable spleen had continued for twenty-four hours longer, I should have quitted all intercourse with my kind. Well, well, a fresh breeze has sprung up, and will soon again fill the flapping sails.

The *bon jour* of the Creole, however, sounds drily. It seems as if he would discover, whether his politeness is again to be repaid by ill-bred haughtiness. I will try to efface the bad impressions I may have made. They are good people, these Creoles—not very shrewd, but still I prefer them to the 'cute Yankees, in spite of their foolish dancing mania, which even on their first settlement, they could not get rid of. It must have appeared funny enough, to see them trotting about in their wool blankets, and dancing the "*minuet de la cour*." But, it is twelve o'clock—they are letting off steam, and the boat takes in wood again.

"*Monsieur! voilà votre terre!*" said the Creole, pointing to the shore and the wood-piles. I looked through the window, and found that the Creole was right. We had so long chatted with the demoiselles, that hours and miles passed like moments. But my overseer, during my absence had erected a wood-yard for steamboats. This at least, was an improvement! And here he is himself, the genuine Mister Bleaks. The Creole seems inclined to accompany me home. I cannot prevent it, but I hope he will not be quite so polite. Nothing is more horrible than such a visit, when one has been years away from house and home; the *lares* and *penates* of a bachelor are the most careless household deities imaginable.

"Mr. Bleaks," I said, stepping toward him, although in his red flannel shirt, calico breeches, and straw hat, he did not

seem to care much for his master, "will you be so good as to have the gig and trunk brought on shore?"

"Ah, Mr. Howard!" replied the man, "is it you? We did not expect you so soon."

"Hope to be none the less welcome," I answered, somewhat annoyed at the Pennsylvania coolness of the man.

"I trust you did not come alone?" he continued, in the same dominie-like tone. "Did you?" he asked, measuring me with a side-glance; "I thought you would have brought a dozen darkies with you. We need them."

"*Est-il permis, Monsieur?*" now asked the Creole, putting his hand upon mine, and pointing to the house.

"And the steamer?" I rejoined, in a tone so drawled out, that any one, only a little versed in physiognomy and psychology, might have seen that he was superfluous.

"Oh, that will wait," he replied, smiling.

What could I do? Disagreeable as it was, I had to start for my house with this strange man. And really, it was a terrible sight—a mass of wild disorder! Everything looked so dilapidated—so lost—so ruined, that I became disgusted. I had not expected such a state of things. Only solitary fragments remained of the fence around the garden; the pigs were enjoying themselves in the garden itself. And the house! Jupiter! not a window was whole; every frame filled up with old pants and coats, and torn pieces of women's dresses! I could not expect to find orange or citron-groves, for I had planted none; but this was really too bad.

Every picture should have its shade, unless it be an *al Fresco*; but here, all was shade—all night. Not a living soul was to be seen during our tour from the landing and through the decaying trees we had to pass. Here at last we find something alive. It is a trio of black monsters, who are wrestling in the mud with Marius and Sylla, each with half a shirt on, and dirty as a human being possibly can be. And the monkeys stare at me with their rolling eyes, and laughingly gallop off behind the house. Oh! here's old Sybil! she stands before a kettle pending from a pyramid of poles—a perfect counterfeit of one of Macbeth's witches. Now she looks up, but without moving. I will have to pay my respects. Oh, now she recognizes me, and comes waddling toward me with her long spoon. It is strange that she has not yet turned her Turkey collar, which cost me seventy-five dollars. Now she runs

and cries with joy. There is at least one creature then, rejoiced at my arrival. And behold the anxiety with which she looks toward the kettle, and the three pans, where ham and salt pork are cooking; she has evidently not yet decided whether to leave me or the kettle and pans. But the Creole seems to increase her distress unutterably. She raises her shrill voice to its highest pitch; but no one appears.

"*Et les chambres,*" she cried, "*et la maison, et tout, et tout.*"

I knew not what she meant, but she pointed at my companion, groaning: "*Mais mon Dieu! pourrai-je seulement un moment. Tenez-la, Massa!*" she begged, offering me the spoon, and beginning to go away, again pointing to the house.

"*Que voulez vous donc!*" I cried angrily, and then came the explanation: The rooms had not been cleaned, or aired; in short, they were in a state, which would not permit the visit of any stranger. She only needed a quarter of an hour to arrange everything, and during this time, I would perhaps be so good, for the honor of the house, as to turn the meat and vegetables in the kettle. I told her to mind her business, and turned toward the house. I had still one consolation, namely, that very probably, the residence of my companion was no better, perhaps not so good; for these Creoles above Alexandria still live like half-Indians. The horrible state of my domestic affairs did not seem to astonish Monsieur Menon. As I entered the saloon, instead of settees and chairs, I found piles of green and Mexican cotton seed; in one corner, old blankets, and in another a wash-basin. The rooms had been treated in a way still more provoking. Bangor had taken up his residence in my sleeping apartment, and the musketoe-nets had very probably emigrated to Mrs. Bleak's domicile. From this terrible disorder, I turned quickly into the yard, for I was in a terrible rage.

"*Mais tout cela est bien charmant!*" said the Creole. I looked at the man, for I was really in no humor to bear sarcasm. He looked perfectly serious. I shook my head, but the tormentor again took my arm and drew me toward the huts of my negroes and farther toward the cotton-fields. They were rich fields, in spite of the unheard of negligence; the excellent soil had driven up the plants nearly to man's height, and it was in June. The Creole examined all with the eye of a connoisseur, and shook his head.

The bell of the steamer was heard. Heaven be praised, I thought.

"Monsieur!" he said, "*la plantation est bien charmante, mais ce Mistère Bleaks ne vaut rien, et vous—vous êtes trop gentil-homme.*"

I bit my lips at this harsh compliment, and was silent.

"*Ecoutez!*" he continued, "*vous irez avec moi.*"

"*Moi!*" said I. Is the man mad, to make such a proposition scarcely ten minutes after my arrival at home!

"*Oui, oui Monsieur!*" he said, "*vous irez avec moi. J'ai des choses bien importantes à dire.*"

"*Mais Monsieur!*" I replied coldly, "*J'e suis bien étonné d'une proposition si étrangère —*"

"*Et fait par un étranger,*" added the creole with a smile. "*Mais vraiment, Monsieur Howard! vous êtes venu sous prendre les précautions nécessaires comme je vois—et la fièvre. Ah! Monsieur, quand on est forcé de s'échapper de ses amis! —*"

I looked at the man with astonishment; how did he know this? the bell rang a second time.

"*Eh bien!*" he demanded, "*plait il ou non?*"

I stood embarrassed, confused, angry.

"*J'accepte votre offre,*" I said at last, scarce knowing what I was about, and hurried toward the steamer. Mr. Bleaks shook his head in astonishment. I told him to have a little better care of the plantation, and was just about to step on board the steamer, when my five-and-twenty negroes howling and crying, ran from behind the house.

"*Massa! oh! massa, stay with us!*" cried the men. "*Massa, good, dear massa don't go!*" begged the women.

I requested the captain to stop a few moments.

"What ails you?" I asked somewhat abashed.

One of my slaves bared his shoulder, and two others followed his example.

I cast a penetrating glance at Mr. Bleaks; he grinned. For my honor and conscience it was a saving moment that brought my negroes hither. In my wild impetuosity I would have followed the Creole, without caring in the least for the fate of the five-and-twenty beings, whom I had left in such bad hands. I excused myself to the Creole, promised to visit him shortly, to obtain an explanation of his mysterious words, and bowed. The man made no reply, ran up the gangway, whispered something to the captain, and descended into the cabin.

I had neither time or inclination to be any longer detained by him, and surrounded by my black population, had withdrawn toward the house. The steamer was just leaving, when somebody caught my arm,—it was the Creole. Well, by Jove! this was too much! it only wanted his two demoiselles, to make the thing complete; The man however said dryly:

"*Vous aurez besoin de moi avec ce coquin-là. Nous nous arrangerons, demain viendra mon fils, et après-demain vous irez avec moi.*"

I remained silent, and let the man talk, for his obtrusiveness seemed to border on madness.

My poor negroes and negresses wept and laughed for joy; the children lunged upon their parents; but all eyes were directed to me. I ordered them to go to their cabins, whence I would have them called.

"Blast these darkies!" said Mr. Bleaks; "they have not tasted the whip for some time."

I gave the man no answer, but told old Sybil to call Beppo and Mirza, and nodded to him to retire.

"An examination seems to be intended?" said Mr. Bleaks; "we will have to witness the result of it."

"None of your impertinence, Mr. Bleaks! wait my orders, and retire."

"And none of your superciliousness," replied the man. "We are in a free country, and you have no negro before you."

This was a little too bad. "Mr. Bleaks," I said, with as much coolness as I could command, "you are hereby discharged. Your engagement ends on the first of July; there are yet twenty days, and you shall be paid for them."

"I shall not leave the house until my salary, outlay, and expenses are paid me," he replied coolly.

"Bring your accounts," I replied. My blood began to boil.

The man had called his wife through the window, and she entered. After exchanging a few words with him, she retired again. I had meanwhile opened my trunk, and looked over some accounts, letters, and receipts. The woman entered with the account-books, and stood before me, putting her hands into her sides for the purpose of assuming an impudent attitude. Her husband walked quietly into the next room, brought two arm-chairs, and they seated themselves.

Truly, our dear liberty has many discomforts!

"On the 20th December, twenty-five bales of cotton, and four hogsheads of to-

bacco in leaves, delivered to Mr. M—n," he began; "on the 24th of January, again, twenty-five bales and one hoghead of tobacco in leaves."

"Right!" I replied.

"That was our entire harvest," continued the man.

"A considerable difference from last year," I remarked; "ninety-five bales and fifteen hogheads."

"If the gentleman don't like it, he should not have been roving about over half the world," cried Mr. Bleaks.

"Leaving us to die here in this fever-hole, without money or anything," added Mistress Bleaks.

"Go on!" I said to the man.

"That is all. For this I have received of Mr. M—n, six hundred dollars on account of salary, leaving three hundred dollars still due."

"Good!" I replied.

"Further," continued the man, "I have expended for corn-meal, ham, salt pork, blankets and calicoes, four hundred dollars, which makes seven hundred; next four thousand fence-rails; a sum altogether of seven hundred and forty dollars."

I hurried to the room, where the wreck of my secretary stood, for pen and ink, wrote an order on my banker, and returned. At no price would I have this man any longer in my house.

"Allow me—" said the Creole, who had been a silent witness of this scene, putting out his hand for the paper.

"Excuse me, sir!" I replied, almost angry at the man's obtrusion; "In these affairs I would wish to be my own master and counsellor."

"Stop then, and allow me a few questions to Mr. Bleaks," continued the man, without seeming to care for my refusal. "Will Mr. Bleaks read his account again?"

"Shouldn't know why! Mind your own affairs!" was the answer.

"Then I will do it for Mr. Bleaks," said the Creole.

"On the 20th of December, twenty-five bales of cotton, and four hogheads of tobacco-leaves, delivered to Mr. M—n. Is it not so?"

Mr. Bleaks made no reply.

"On the 23rd of December, twenty bales of cotton and one hoghead of tobacco, delivered to Mr. G—s. Is it not so?"

The married couple began to change color.

"On the 24th of January, five-and-twenty bales of cotton, and one hoghead of tobacco delivered," continued the Creole; "and on the 10th of February again,

twenty-two bales, and two hogheads, delivered to Mr. G—g. Is it not so?"

"An infernal lie!" suddenly burst out the overseer.

"We shall be able to prove it very soon," continued the Creole. "Mr. Howard, you have on this man a demand of precisely two thousand five hundred and ten dollars, of which he has in the most rascally manner cheated you. Five hundred dollars we will prove afterward."

The couple were in a perfect fury. I was petrified.

"We must be quick with these people, else they will escape ere we are aware. Send immediately to justice M— for a warrant, and give a wink to the sheriff and the two constables. He can't escape below, but he will try above."

I immediately made my arrangements, and sent off Bangor, my smartest servant boy. The poor fellow jumped for joy.

"And you must write immediately to the house of G—g," continued the Creole.

In an hour all was done. The Montezuma was just coming down the river. We called the captain ashore, gave him some hints of what had happened, intrusted him with our letters, and were just about to accompany him to his boat, when we saw a figure creeping along behind the wood-piles, and toward the steamer. It was Mr. Bleaks, just intending to take a trip to New Orleans. We found the honest man among the deck hands, and blackened with coal almost like a negro. Of course he was not allowed to go. Four stout fellows brought him back to his residence. We had provided against any further attempts; and the next morning the gentleman was in still safer keeping.

"But, my dear Monsieur Menou!" I said, as we were at table, and he had just opened the second bottle of his Chambertin—for the good man had not forgotten even that; "how comes it that you take so much unmerited interest in me?"

"Yes, yes! you are free-born citizen-aristocrats," replied the man, half-smiling and half-serious, "You of course cannot understand this, with your stiff, proud, republican egoism, which thinks only of itself, and looks grandly down on us Creoles, as on an inferior race. But while we don't forget ourselves, we still think of our neighbors. Your affairs, of the heart, as well as of the purse, are well known to me; and, as you see, I can make good use of my information."

In silence I warmly pressed his hand.

"We have no particular love for you northerners, but you are an exception;

you have something of the French *etourderie* in your blood, and much of our generosity."

I smiled at this moral mirror.

"You have long suffered your friends to trifle with you, and they are now amused at your disappointment in love."

I jumped up from the table. "By all the powers——!"

"Yes, yes, sir! let that alone. Emily Warren is an excellent girl, but still a Yankee girl, and too cunning for you."

"Thanks for the compliment."

"To-morrow my son will be here. Your plantation needs only some steady attention, and a small capital of eight or ten thousand dollars; and in a few years it will compare with the best on the Mississippi. My son will give it that attention, and you must remain a few months with me."

"But, Mr. Menou——"

"No *but*, Mr. Howard! You have the necessary sums. You must get twenty more hands—we will look out for good ones. To-morrow shall settle the rest."

The next morning the young man arrived—a plain, active youth of about twenty. The day passed in examining the plantation; and in a few hours the young man had gained my entire confidence. I recommended my people to his care, and in the morning we embarked on board the "Ploughboy" for his father's plantation.

CHAPTER VII:

NOT VERY INTERESTING, BUT QUITE NATURAL.

THE good Creole had treated me in a most Christianlike manner. As we stopped at the house of the justice, and I explained to him—he was already in his nightgown—the immediate causes of my application for the arrest of Mr. Bleak, the good man answered me with the naïve confession: "I knew all, Mr. Howard, as clear as the sun; I saw the bales that he stole from you, or that he wanted to steal."

"But for heaven's sake, man!" I exclaimed, "why did you permit it to go on so?"

"Because I had nothing to do with it, my dear!" he replied dryly.

"You should at least have informed my lawyer."

"It was not my business," he replied again; but suddenly his eyes became dark, and fixing them firmly upon me, he be-

gan to give me a sort of admonition, for which I was not in the least prepared.

"He, he!" he commenced, fixing his nightcap on the left ear, "you gentlemen come down from the north, with your dozen daries, expend a few thousand dollars, and then think you may play the absentee-gentleman, and that you do us a great honor, in leaving us the trouble of scraping dollars together and sending them off, that you may spend them in other countries. I am almost sorry, Mr. Howard, that you did not come six months later."

"And give the rascal time to make off with his prey?"

"He has at least been working; he has a wife and children; and he has been useful to the county and the country."

"The devil!" I exclaimed, interrupting him. "Now, indeed, for a justice, you have got a very strange code."

"That is framed neither by Boni, nor Livingston; but true patriotism," replied the man in earnest, pointing at his head.

I stared at him; but he looked at me in return. In fact, the man was not so very much mistaken. In what should consist the difference between a Louisianian or Virginian, and an Irish or English aristocrat? We are still in much danger, notwithstanding our republicanism. Particularly dashing journeys are unsafe; my trial had nearly cost me three thousand dollars. As the affairs stood, the goods were indeed saved, and the money was still in the hands of Messrs. G——g, who probably thought in this case just like Squire Turnips. I handed the man the necessary documents and papers, bid him good night, and most cordially shook hands. The morning was dawning, when we left the steamboat for a second time, and sat down in a carriage, which, though altogether out of fashion, carried us quickly along. I had just again fallen into the arms of sweet Morpheus, when a soft voice not ten paces from us cried out, "*Les voici!*" I looked up, rubbed my eyes—it was Louise, the youngest daughter of the Creole, who stood at the verandah, and bade us welcome.

Who, of all our northern daughters of Eve, could be induced, for the sake of seeing her papa, to leave her maidenly couch at six in the morning, and to have black coffee ready for him, that the vapors from the swamps might not take away his appetite? Monsieur Menou did not appear to see anything in the self-sacrificing devotion of his little daughter, and did not hesitate to inquire, whether the servants had already taken their breakfast, and whether they were already ploughing or digging.

On this point too, Louise could give him information. At the same time, she showed, that during the twenty-four hours since her arrival, she had become well acquainted with the circumstances of her liege subjects. Tom had a splinter in his foot; Pompey had sore eyes and squinted strongly at Sarah; and Curgy had made a new conquest of a neighbor's Cato. All these things, though very interesting to Menou and Louise, almost set me a yawning. I therefore, in the meanwhile, looked round the dining saloon—the furniture of which was to give me a foretaste of the existing civilization. The mats were of the newest fashion and very elegant; but the side-board was horribly unfashionable. Tables, chairs, and sofas, were French instead of American. On the walls were copperplate representations—not of the battle of New-Orleans, or the glorious victories of Perry and McDonough over the English on Lakes Erie and Champlain—no, a few curiosities from the times of *Louis quinze* and seize.

The whole appeared to have a strong, or rather a faint, smack of the *ci-devant* Gallicism—not of the republican, nor the imperial, nor the restored Jesuitical—but of the lost, spoiled, ancient regime.

Yes, the true art of comfortable living, we find only among the true Americans and the Englishmen, provided they have money. The French are still in a barbarous state; splendor and show in the drawing-room—dirt and decay in the bed-room and on the body. Our pride and arrogance and our eternal criticising, are bad things—yet we cannot do without them. We look freely around us, and if we sometimes speak ironically of our poor trans-Atlantic brethren in Adam, we do not ask them to spare us. Now let us glance at the house.

It stands on the side of a hill in the form of a sugar-loaf; the only eminence within four miles. On the south, east and west, it is surrounded by a broad belt of locust and cotton-trees; only on the north side is it open to the cool breath of Boreas, who is here a very agreeable guest.

A clear rivulet, at least for Louisiana, pours its water from a gentle eminence into a lake, which, as a Yankee would say, is one hundred and eighty feet long, eighty wide, and has a fall of forty-five feet, thereby offering a most beautiful opportunity for machinery—at least for a tannery, a sure antidote against the cholera. We hope the Czar will spare us this present; we are his best friends, as the last presidential message said. I have got nothing to say against the friendship of

the Czar; he is a brave man; but he and his stinking, loyal Bojars, must let us alone.

To return to Monsieur Menou's house. It consists of three different structures, which have been erected during the times of the grandfather, father and son. They are now united in one. The cause of this union does honor to the heart of the Creole: "My children shall always remember how many troubles their grand parents had, before they earned comforts for their successors."

"Yes, they will," responded a voice, just as we were standing before the door.

"*Madame Menou, j'ai l'honneur de vous présenter Monsieur Howard, notre voisin.*"

"*Oui restera chez nous pendant longtemps,*" the little girls added, with joy.

I bowed dutifully to the lady, and could hardly find an answer, when the two little creatures took me by the hand, and led me, *nolens volens*, into the house, and through half-a-dozen zig-zag ways and corridors, to show me to my room, while I was in constant danger of breaking my head at the many corners and turns.

Finally, we arrived in an octagonal apartment, which was destined for me, as being the best; situated just above the water, and therefore always cool.

And now they turned out again, and down we went to Pa and Ma. The Ma is a comfortable, good looking woman, with a somewhat flat face, wherein the expression of goodness and *laissez aller* is predominant. Such an expression always makes me feel at home. She receives me like an old acquaintance, as if I had already been for years her intended son-in-law. No compliments, no forced politeness; even her features do not take the trouble of *seeming* gay, as is usual on the reception of strangers.

But look there! what does this mean? A lady with two gentlemen—they are evidently foreigners. The olive color of the one betrays the Spaniard; but it is more difficult to designate the other. They come down the verandah and join us like members of the family. They are introduced to me as Signor Silveira and Signor Pablo; the lady is the wife of the former. With a noble figure, black eyes, a Roman nose, formed proudly, a beautiful mouth, with two excellent rows of ivory teeth, her whole appearance is very attractive. I always considered our northern girls the most beautiful, even the British not excepted; but this woman can match our most unexceptionable beauty.

But softly, dear Howard! Don Sil-

veira, it seems, keeps his wife near him, and Louise, too, seems not to be satisfied with my republican looks. No fear! matrimonial gallantries I do not like. *Liberty and property* is my motto, and man and wife are each other's property.

I keep to the bottle that shines at me from the breakfast-table, at which we have now, thank heaven! sat down; I feel strangely, a little squeamish, as we say in Virginia. Our guests continue earnest and solemn, eating little; and yet the steaks are excellent and the young quails magnificent, and the champagne really a Napoleon of his kind. But I have no objections if they do not take any of the last; the more will be left for us. Ah! egoism!

"Who are those gentlemen with the lady?" I inquired of my host after they had left the room.

"Mexicans," answered Menou; "but who they are, it is impossible to tell you."

"Why, do you not know them?" I asked.

"I know them well; otherwise they would not be in my house; but even the members of my family," he whispered, "do not know them."

"Poor devils!" I thought; "victims at the altar of liberty, who have brought their seven last things to the goddess, and in return, have been cast out from house and home. In Mexico, things still look portentous; Guerrero, Bustamente, Santa Ana at the head, and at the tail a race to whom I can wish nothing better than a real, genuine Muscovite driver—a Peter, who would whip them until they came to reason. Thus thinks not Monsieur Menou.

Oh, Liberty! yes, it is a godly spark, that glows, and easily inflames, when the recognized rights of men, and the firm wish to keep society upright, bring millions in contact like steel and flint. Where the spark glows alone, there we would now cast in the decayed punk of old despotism. There must be millions of sparks, and then the decayed remnants will soon burn away, and on them a new temple may be consecrated to the goddess. It cannot be long, ere these miserable slaves will arise from the slime. In some parts they have arisen already, and in the chaos we see the godlike spark, that shall produce a blaze of wonders!

Julie and Louise had meanwhile gone into another room, to hold the third or fourth review of the thousand and one delicacies, which they had brought from the capital. Had a painter seen the mother presiding over this review with heartfelt joy, looking at the Brussels laces, Gros de

Naples, Indiennes, gauzes, and the innumerable other things that had to pass before her, he might paint a picture of real Creole comfort. No scolding on account of the extravagance; all was charming; everything had its destination; and I could not but wonder, how these hundreds of yards were to be disposed of, which lay on tables, chairs, sofas, and bureaus, enough to convert a whole county of New Jersey belles into queens of splendor. The whole family was a specimen of happy, harmless beings; there was a certain unartificial nature among them; a jovial petulance, always knowing its limits, and never degenerating into indecency. Each and every one acted in a laughing, merry way, and still everything went on as well as in our old-fashioned, stiff style. The order of domestic affairs, at least, was admirable, and the breakfast was delicious. Even Mrs. Houston, so celebrated for her *derniers* and *dejeuners* might profitably go to school here. On this subject I profess to be a *savant*.

I once fell madly in love—I believe it was my nineteenth serious case—with a Massachusetts belle, from whose head, as I live, three novels had already sprung, so sentimental, and so fantastical, that they would have done honor to the German. I was almost crazy about her, until her Ma hit on the unfortunate idea of inviting me to a *dinner en famille*. There, the tough mutton-chops ruined my teeth for two days, and my nineteenth love—for ever.

But, let me save my praises until I have eaten salt with these people. Our proverb is: *Love me a little, but love me the longer*. We will leave the lovely little creatures under the care of their Ma, and overlook, in company of Monsieur Menou, his plantation. It is not a bad one; *au contraire*, the view upon the river, and the mode of watering the cotton and corn-fields by ditches are excellent. The man has over three hundred acres of cultivated land, and a harvest of two hundred and fifty bales of cotton a year—a fine income! Only three children! The plantation comprises four thousand acres—a third of which is not to be sneezed at. But what would the world say. The aristocratic Howard and a Creole, perhaps half-breed! But he has sixty negroes and negresses, and a whole horde of their children, and the daughters are not ugly, especially Louise. We'll see.

"Apropos!" inquired the Creole, as we were walking through the fields; "You've got three thousand dollars at G—g's?"

I nodded.

"And eight thousand with Mr. Richards?"

"How do you know this, Monsieur Menou?"

(*Per parenthesis:* We generally like to call a Frenchman or any foreigner, with the exception of cousin John Bull, by the title Monsieur.)

Monsieur Menou smiled at my question. "How do I know," he said, "that Mr. Howard has travelled fifteen hundred miles, to see the beautiful Emily Warren, who knew of his arrival, and still gave herself away to Mr. Doughby?"

"And made a face while she did so, like a true Iphigenia in Aulis," I muttered.

The man nodded. "Such things we learn when we visit the *haut-ton* of the capital."

"Hallo! Monsieur Menou, the simple Monsieur Menou, also a *haut-ton homme*!" I said, almost with scorn, looking at the man's unbleached pantaloons, jacket, and straw hat.

"My wife is a born M——y, my grandfather was president of the parliament at Toulouse," was his answer.

I bowed. The Indian or black race had done nothing for the renovation of this seed as I had feared.

"And is it true," I continued, "that poor Howard has become the theme of general conversation?"

"Yes," answered the man, "and if I was Mr. Howard I would play my good friends a very nice trick."

"Let us hear it."

The man shook his head. "To give advice to persons, who think themselves more learned and better than we, is something beyond the province of a Menou."

I looked with astonishment at the man. He was right. A sterling character, like him, can for some time bear the scorn of one like us, but the patience even of a Job is soon at an end.

We walked on for some time.

"Do you want to hear my proposition?" he commenced, at length.

"I do, indeed."

"And will you promise to leave the fulfilment altogether to me?"

I bethought myself, and answered in the affirmative.

"Then let me have, of the eleven thousand dollars you have lying idle, seven thousand at my free disposal."

"And Richards?" I interrupted him.

"Is better off than you. Be magnanimous where magnanimity helps, and where you are respected for it; but to throw away

kindness, is to injure yourself and act foolishly. There is the receipt for the sum; I will render you an account of its expenditure."

With these words he handed me the receipt, which was already drawn. The man has some design upon me, and enters a little too energetically into my business. The thought of Richards was still lying heavily at my heart. My indolence, with the foolish notions of generosity which I had accumulated from wagon-loads of novels, etc., revolted against the idea of hurting my friend just at this moment. But my word was already given, and I consented.

Julie and Louise appeared almost not to observe when I entered the house. The one was occupied in the kitchen, and the other was tearing and cuffing gingham and Indianes—an operation which could be heard fifty paces off. At supper, the fun commenced again, and there was no end to the coaxing. It seemed as if the girls, after the work of the day, had awaked to real life; just before going to sleep.

The three strangers did not discommode themselves in the least. About eight o'clock, they seemed to be tired of the long sitting. They whispered and whispered, and ere we remarked it, they had left the table and the saloon.

The tones of an excellent piano-forte were now heard.

"We must hurry," said the Creole, "or we shall see unpleasant faces."

And so we went out to the saloon.

Now, this saloon is really elegant. At the beautiful piano the strange lady is seated, playing a cotillon; Julie has already arranged with papa; Louise falls to my lot, and Don Silveira has the honor of the house.

And so it was until twelve. The ball had just become most interesting, when Menou stepped up to me, smiling: "*Voilà notre manière Créole; mais c'en est ayez.* These are the pleasures of our life," he continued; "everything has its time: talking, joking, coaxing, working, praying, and dancing. The truly reasonable man knows how to unite all, so that the one does not interfere with the other. Only in this manner, can our solitary and homely life become agreeable and happy; we are never ennuyée. Good night!"

CHAPTER VIII.

VERY UNEXPECTED.

THUS passed eight full weeks, like as many hours. I had become familiar with these amiable people—quite domestic and economical! I could hardly recollect how dollars and bank notes looked. The time passed off like a holiday; and there was so much uprightness, heartiness, and sympathy, among the seventy or eighty members of this little patriarchial establishment, that I easily forgot all the woes and pleasures of the world. And I forgot them *indeed*; whole packs of newspapers were lying before me untouched, and every day made me more a backwoodsman.

In the mornings I dressed in my white linen pantaloons and jacket, put on my straw hat, and followed Monsieur Menou into his fields and to the cotton-press. The afternoon passed in looking through the accounts, or in reading the cuts and thrusts between Colonel Stone and Major Noah; and the evening was closed by an impromptu dance, or some amusing conversation.

One evening, we had just sat down to supper, when Monsieur Menou proposed a nocturnal deer hunt. I was pleased and eager to receive the necessary instructions. The two Mexicans asked likewise for permission to accompany us, when the lady rushed in with terror.

"Don Man——" she cried, but she cut off the word, of which the last syllables seemed to die on her tongue. "*Madre de Dios!*" she continued in the Spanish language, "not this time."

There was something so soft, so tender in her noble, yet terrified appearance, that we all stared at her in wonder. Her husband entreated her to be quiet, and promised to remain; but it seemed to cost him pain. I assured her, that there was no danger.

"No danger!" she repeated in her sonorous Castilian language—"no danger! But, you let nobody know of your intentions!" said she turning toward Menou.

"Certainly not," he replied.

Now for the first time I remembered that the young couple had never been walking outside since my arrival. My eye again fell on the young man; he had exquisitely beautiful features, a pale but not unhealthy countenance, a high forehead, and his eyes were the most brilliant I ever saw; fire flashed in them that did not seem destined to be extinguished in the waves of the Red River. Although he gave himself much pain to conceal it,

his whole appearance was commanding. It was just this commanding air that made me rather cool toward the young man, whose age might have been about thirty.

We very seldom, or indeed never, permit the stranger to assume airs in our country; but his devotion to the will of his wife had taken away much of this unfavorable impression. *I respect a man who loves his wife.*

"And is there really no danger?" the angel—I mean the donna—inquired of me again. I assured her that there was none. She whispered some words to him, and kissing her hand, he asked again for permission to accompany us. These two persons, at table, generally had to do only with one another. And he seemed to become jealous if the donna spoke even to Julie or Louise. Their companion was an insignificant individual who seemed to love them with a kind of holy reverence. They had six servants with them.

We left the table a little earlier than usual, put on our woollen coats, took our guns, and got on horseback. Six negroes bearing torches, and a pack of dogs had preceded us. The clock struck ten, when we left. It was a dark, hot night; the thunder—our ordinary evening music in this part of the world—rolled up from the south, and warned us of an approaching storm. During the first ten minutes of our ride, the atmosphere was almost suffocating; then a soft wind set in among the tops of the trees; the thunder rolled nearer from the Gulf, and seemed to prepare for war with the elements. From time to time the lightning descends from the dark clouds through the trees, and for a few seconds the forest burned as if with a magic flame. Again a brilliant flash—and nearer and nearer rolled the thunder—thunder, compared with which, that of the north is a mere beating of the drum. Even our dogs became frightened, and pressed as closely to the horses as possible.

We had just entered a thicket of laurel trees, and our leading dog had stopped and cocked his ears. We all alighted from our horses, and our dogs approached.

About twenty paces off, two brilliant balls of fire were visible. These were the deer, who, with rolling eyes gazed on the strange spectacle. We kept our guns in readiness—the Creole and I agreed to take the one, the two Spaniards the other. We fired at a certain word—we heard a rattling fall, a rustling sound, and immediately afterward a "*Sacré!*" and "*Diablo!*" and "*Por Dios!*" The six torches were out and at our feet. The Creole had

jumped aside; the negroes were lying terrified on the ground, and the two dons along with them.

"*Santa Vierge!*" exclaimed the one. "*Maldito!*" exclaimed the other. "*Maldito Gojo! Por Dios! Santissima madre que Dios nos guarda!*" exclaimed the former in reply.

Monsieur Menou and his negroes had, at the first appearance of danger thrown themselves on the ground; the young Mexican, less instructed in this nocturnal sport, remained standing, and thus he was run over by the frightened deer, I dragged the howling Don Pedro from his companion, and looked with Menou to see if he was hurt. His coat was torn, and from both thighs blood was streaming. They had been lacerated by the horns of the deer. Happily the wounds were not deep, or his bad aim might have costed him his life. We put him on his horse and commenced our journey home.

It was about midnight, when we arrived with the dead deer and the wounded Don, at the gates of the park. A white figure at the Mexican's window informed us that his wife was still awake. As if by a sort of frightful presentiment, she came rushing down stairs crying, "*Perdido,*" and fell to the ground before the door.

"For heaven's sake!" cried a second female voice; "a misfortune! Is it Howard?"

It was Louise, who came breathless, and in her night dress, rushing from her room.

"Oh! it is only the Mexican! God be praised!" she whispered.

"Thanks, dear Louise, for your merciless words; they make me happy!" With these words I pressed her in my arms, and imprinted a kiss on her lips.

"Miscreant!" she cried, hastening back to the house.

I now followed the train to the rooms of the Mexican. His wife, like a white marble, was hanging over the wounded man. It cost Menou no little trouble to get her away; but the charitable Creole was active. Where he learned his surgery I know not; but the confidence with which he cut the wounds, burned and washed them out, gave me confidence in his skill. They were not dangerous; but in the excessive heat—the thermometer varied from 85° to 97°—and coming from a deer, they might have become so. In about half an hour, he stepped before Donna Isabella, and told her in a confidential, firm voice, that her husband would recover in a few days. I had held one of the candles during the operation, and I could not help looking at the beautiful creature. When

Menou gave her the consoling information, she directed her eyes with a catholic look to Heaven. As I put the candle on the table, my eyes fell on her miniature; next to it was a letter to Don Manuel Mier y Teran, Mariscal de Campo, and two or three addressed to a lieutenant-general.

So this was the celebrated Mexican chief. I went thoughtfully into my bedroom. But soon Louise stepped out into the foreground of my phantasy; so the lovely girl had watched—watched impatiently! She, too, had not been able to sleep. On the first rumor of a misfortune, winged terror had pressed from her the name, which she carried in her heart. During all my stay, I had not thought of love. All were so busy in the house, all in motion; there was no time to harbor sentimental thoughts—yet now they came. It is very pleasant for a bachelor at eight-and-twenty, who has been sacked so often, that he may commence a business in sacks, to know that he is dear to the heart of a girl of seventeen.

At breakfast she could not look at me, but I looked at her the more. Where were my eyes? Julie was certainly too stout for my *goût*; but Louise—she is no doubt a very nice girl, slender, with a fine *taille*, milk and blood in her face, from which fun, goodness and frugality are beaming; beautiful hands, and a gait!—in short I became thoughtful. I must see, how matters look at home, I muttered.

"Would you please to lend me your carriage to the river?" I inquired of the Creole.

"With all my heart. Only an excursion, if I dare inquire?"

"No, a little further. I want to see how things go on at home."

"Leave us?" cried Louise, and, a little after, Julie and her mother.

"If you'll allow me, I'll shortly take the liberty to visit you again; but for to day I must go."

The roses had disappeared from Louise's cheeks; she turned, and I thought I saw a tear glistening in her eye.

We sat for a quarter of an hour, ere a word was uttered. At last the Creole said: "You seemed to be amused here; has anything occurred?"

"Something, to me, very important, I really must leave immediately," was my reply.

Louise had hurried from the saloon; I followed her, and found her tottering toward her room.

"Louise!" I cried.

She wept.

"I leave you to-day!"

"So I have heard."

"To attend to my house!"

"My brother does that for you," she whispered, "why then leave us?"

"Because I must, as soon as possible, have a pretty little room for myself and my Louise; will you follow me there as my beloved wife?"

"Speak to Papa," she whispered, as a ray of joy overspread her lovely face; and then she turned her trembling looks to the ground.

"Take her, my dear Howard," said Papa, who had followed at our heels—"take her, and you will have an excellent wife."

Louise sank into my arms, and the next hour I was on my way home.

So, I was pledged at last and my bachelorhood was at an end. My choice was a good one—I felt that; Louise is a most excellent girl; modest, smart, lively, charming, and witty; under her hand everything succeeds, everything grows; she treats the negroes like sisters, and the negroes with great kindness. But all these good reasons for marrying her, I had only just discovered; yesterday I thought as little of this girl, as of the Grand Sultan; the idea of taking her for a wife, had like an electric spark entered my brain. Will I never rue this step? Her first days in my wilderness will really, be no honey-moon.

It was four o'clock in the afternoon when I arrived at home. I was almost afraid, as I had been the last time. I did not know my plantation—I really did not. Those immense logs eight to ten feet in diameter, which, planted there by storms, had lain in wild chaos before my dwelling, were nowhere to be seen. My garden had been extended, and enclosed by an excellent railing; around the front of the house, a verandah had been raised, and two strange darkies were at work there.

I alighted. Young Menou met me with a contented smile. I shook him by the hand, and pointed with astonishment at the improvements.

"These are trifles," he said; "but the cotton-press cost us some labor, for that was entirely gone."

The melancholy "talla-i-ho" of forty voices resounded in chorus from there.

"And how could you accomplish all these wonders?" I asked, astounded.

"Why, you have sent us fifteen people, father lent us ten of our own, and so we could do something."

With emotions of gratitude, I walked

toward the verandah. It was erected in the most excellent taste; the Venetian blinds ran to the height of eight feet around the east, south, and west side of the house; the north side, as usual, remained open. The floor of the saloon was covered with glittering pale yellow matting. "In the interior arrangements," said the young man, "Papa did not wish to interfere, only two rooms were made an exception to this."

Full of expectation I approached my sleeping apartment. Magnificent! a beautiful bed—and, a double one, fixed up with all the requisites, just as if the catastrophe had already been expected; a black girl of fifteen years was still working at the musketoe-nets; the whole house was changed as if by the touch of a magician's wand.

"And who has planned these interior arrangements?"

"The girl is Louise's servant," said Menou, laughing; "she must be inspired with the spirit of her master."

Meanwhile the old wench appeared at the head of my subjects, all of whom looked fresh and glad, and came dancing and singing. There were ten boys and five girls of whom I did not know one. The young man presented them to me as my own; his father, knowing my hatred of slave sales, had procured them by the aid of a good friend, who sent them here. They were all unmarried.

I looked critically at Menou. The Creoles permit liberties to their negroes, which run counter to our feelings of decency. Every one of my pairs had been married; and even during my travels I had looked sharply to decency and order in my black establishment. The young man quieted my doubts; the girls had meanwhile been lodged in the house formerly occupied by Mr. Bleaks, and the boys in two small houses, which he had built; eight other houses were in progress. So my wishes were fulfilled, and I stood in one of the neatest houses on Red River. I blessed the lightning spark.

"Ah!" said the young man, "there are some letters arrived for you, which I forgot to send, owing to press of business."

I opened them. They were letters from Richards, pressingly inviting me to afford him the pleasure of a visit. In the second, he was more pressing still, and seemed very much astonished at my having become so domestic; and in the third, I received the information that Emily had returned, to which was added in a postscript, that one of the beauties of Boston, a cousin, came with her.

Not a word about the eight thousand dollars: this is indeed strange. Richards is not so indifferent to earthly riches, as to make fun of his grudge, when it relates to money affairs! "There are reasons," I said to the young man, to whom I did not wish to show weakness, "which demands my punctual return to your father's house."

"Indeed?" cried the young Creole in astonishment.

"Yes, at this moment, I just hear the steamboat coming up; I'll go at once." He looked amazed at me; Sybil was shaking her head; but it was part of my nature—*quickly or not at all*. I waved with my handkerchief; it was the same Red River, which had taken me home eight weeks ago.

"Mr. Howard!" cried the captain in joy. "Your plantation looks first rate, since your return; you are smart indeed."

"Do you think so?" was my answer.

There is something truly practical in our American nature, that distinguishes us from all other nations of the globe—a certain straight forward, healthy common sense, that shows through all flirtation into reality—an honest, independent spirit, that only pays respect to him who merits it. The richest idler, who carries in his pocket-book, hundreds of thousands, expects in vain that tribute which half his wealth would procure for him in other countries. Coldly and proudly the majority pass him, to pay their true republican respect to the less wealthy man, who owes his elevation to the works of his head and hands. It is this free, manly spirit, that produced the great internal revolution in our government, which shook off the yoke of mean aristocracy, and planted our liberty on a firm basis. I, the rich travelling planter, had hardly been remarked until now; my overseer was even more in the eyes of my fellow citizens than myself. The metamorphose on my prosperity had at once induced a sudden revolution of ideas, and everybody stood around me, listening to my words, as if they were those of some great reformer, or even, of a greater still—a demagogue. It was rather pleasant to me, I must confess.

This time also, I arrived in the morning at the residence of the beloved family. But the carriage had been forgotten, and, as I ran over the distance at a quick pace, the house appeared to be ten good miles from the landing place. It took a good hour, ere, bathed in perspiration, I arrived at the house, to the astonishment of every-

"Returned so quickly? Has any misfortune happened?" was the inquiry of all. "No," replied I, drily; "I forgot something."

"And what may that be?"

"My Louise! Yes, assuredly," I continued, with emotion, "I found, on arriving at my desert, that it was changed into a paradise, so that I could not help myself. So I have returned, and entreat my love to divide it with me. To-morrow, if it is God's will, we go down to New-Orleans, to see our Peter Antoine and our reverend Rector."

"But nothing has been fixed—no dowry is ready—nothing in the world," commenced Ma and Pa—"dear Howard, do 'nt be foolish!"

"Our Yankee girls," I replied, laughing, "jump into the bride's bed, when they have got six shifts and one and a half dresses."

"Well, let him have his own way," said Menou, "we will take care that he does not run short."

"Apropos—how is it with the eight thousand dollars?" I inquired.

"I only wanted to try your fortitude, and to see if you sought your own happiness. If you had refused me, Louise would never have become yours, even if you had possessed all the plantations on the Mississippi. Meanwhile, I advanced the money."

The man became more respectable in my eyes every moment. The evening was one of the most happy I had ever spent.

In the morning we drove to the steamboat. The mamma staid at home. Julie was brides-maid, of course. I would with pleasure have taken young Menou along as assistant, but he was wanted on the plantation. We complimented him in parting. For the first time, I gazed without bitter feelings on the beautiful spectacle presented by the rich banks of the magnificent Mississippi. What splendid mansions of pride are these, looking so peacefully through the delicious forests of fig, orange, and lemon trees! The majestic stream, covered with vessels, which brings our produce to the most distant zones—the restless business of thousands, who sink fortune and happiness, under the glorious banner of liberty! Yes, it is a noble sight, to view these hundreds of palaces, standing in rows for miles; and then to remember—the time, when this whole valley was nothing but an endless swamp! How thrilling! Yet, that time I have myself seen; and I am not yet in my prime.

It was a serene morning, when, after a voyage of twenty hours, we arrived in the

capital of our State. We had stopped at Menou's sister's. I hurried to the truly reverend Peter Antoine, and the not less reverend Rector. I turned the corner of the cathedral—some one took hold of my arm.

"Just in time, Richards," said I; "will you wait for me in the Merchants' Coffee House? I shall be there in a quarter of an hour."

"But what is your hurry?"

"Don't ask, but wait."

We parted. Peter Antoine smiled, and the good Rector too, as I invited them to madame's. I hastened to bring Richards.

"Do you know, that Clara will grumble

terribly with you. You must take care. Arthurine Macpherson is an excellent being, and she likes Clara very much."

"Yes, do you know that I am really about to abandon my bachelordom?"

"Well, we'll see; if you behave well, so—we'll for a second time—"

"Defraud you!" I thought.

We had arrived at the door. My old friend looked astonished when he saw Louise, and when Peter Antoine and the reverend Rector began their congratulations. My smile was a little sarcastic; and in a few moments, I was LOUISE'S HAPPY HUSBAND!

END OF PART FIRST.

PART SECOND.

THE

COURTSHIP OF RALPH DOUGHBY, ESQUIRE.

CHAPTER I.

A NIGHT SCENE UPON THE LOWER MISSISSIPPI.

RICHARDS was still standing with a crimsoned cheek, a flaming eye and a gaze that was vacantly fastened upon some distant object.

"Won't you join our party?" said I to him.

He turned suddenly, drew near me, and whispered as he took my hand, "God bless you—you have made a sudden but an excellent choice."

"I searched his countenance; the momentary cloud of perplexity had passed from it, and friendly congratulation and sympathy smiled from his features.

"We shall visit you, Richards, on our return," said I.

"You have spoken out, the thoughts of my soul, and you must stay with us several days."

"That will, be very acceptable to me," said Menou, "for we need a few days to put our furniture in order. Richards knows that the house of a bachelor in its best estate is a sort of Augean stable."

"You will at least, Richards," said I, "learn in the company of my excellent father-in-law, the art of making your acquaintances swallow the coarsest compliments with the greatest avidity."

Menou smiled in his own peculiar manner, and Richards expressing his approbation with a nod, cast a glance upon Louise, from whom he seemed unable to withdraw

his delighted gaze, even for a moment. While the ladies and gentlemen were expressing their congratulations, he followed all her movements with the inquisitive eye of a genuine Yankee, so that at last my dear wife became exceedingly embarrassed.

When the good child heard the name of Richards at his introduction, a cheerful and lively smile played upon her lips, which seemed to ask, "Is your admiration really sincere?"

My own doubts were soon removed, for after she had departed, he took me by the hand and said, "You are indeed a real child of fortune—your Louise is an angel."

"Is she not?" I replied; "she is from a different race than your pale, consumptive and stuffed New-York girl of whom our poet sings:

'When deck'd out for conquest upon her you gaze
You may wed the dear charmer for life;
But never undress her, for out of her stays,
You'll find you've lost half of your wife.'

You are well acquainted with my taste, and the wife of my fancy I have found in Louise;—neither too short nor too tall, neither too much of a Hebe, nor too much of a sylph; what the French call *ovette*, a form that is slight yet well rounded. I hate your angular ladies, that bound up like springs. I wish an eye wherein the soul is mirrored; but above all, give me roses on the cheek, teeth like pearls, and a balmy breath. If you need a connoisseur of female beauty and accomplishments, go to a bachelor of twenty-eight."

I was interrupted in this confidential explanation, which dwelt perhaps too much

upon the mere physical charms of my wife, by this prosaic suggestion from Richards: "Poor boy! you will need money."

"Pshaw! who would speak of money on his wedding day? We will take up our lodgings with you, and as a return for the compliment, you will visit us."

"So it shall be," said Richards; "but in that case it will be necessary for me to go home and make the requisite preparation."

My father-in-law accompanied my friend to the stairs, and we soon saw him on board one of the four hundred steamboats which leave the *levee* at every hour of the twenty-four, hurrying up the Mississippi. Louise waved her white handkerchief from one of the windows, but not until I had lifted her hand thereto. The lovely girl had not yet sincerely forgiven him, but her displeasure was exceedingly agreeable to me. With what son of Adam, and particularly with which of the Uncle Sam branch of his family, has not this disgusting egoism played some unpleasant tricks, and occasionally led from the high road of honor to the by-paths of selfish meanness? It is true that Richards, or rather his company, had imposed too largely upon my credulity, but then, "all is well that ends well," and why should not the past be overlooked, especially as the more generous part of the conspirator's nature had so victoriously overcome the selfish part of it? In my present humor I felt almost indebted to him for the benevolence and self-esteem which I now felt.

It was evident that Richards and his two female accomplices had made up their plans in regard to me, and the frustration thereof was a very disagreeable surprise to him; but all his gloom had vanished after he had seen the celebration of my marriage, and his countenance so plainly evinced his satisfaction that my vanity was flattered in the most delicate manner. To have a third person, even if he be a foe, suddenly converted from past intentions—to have him relinquish all his premeditated and cherished plans, implies a forgetfulness of self that is exceedingly gratifying to our feelings, and inspires us with calmness and repose. We are persuaded that esteem must be the motive, and the right of every individual to free choice and personal independence cannot be more deferentially acknowledged.

But upon how many small circumstances does the happiness and content of our life depend! A scornful sneer, or a word, I admit, would have dissipated all my joy; yes, they might even have destroyed my happiness for a long time. And such a

sneer might have been expected from those prejudices which Richards entertained of the French, and their descendants, the Creoles.

Upon this subject he is half a Randolph—who hated the French almost as much as Johnson, of rough celebrity, hated the Sawneys. This is not the worst of the legacies which John Bull has bequeathed to his dear relations; we are very well satisfied with it, though we paid the said John Bull a high price therefor, because we flatter our thick-skinned enthusiasm, that one American is worth just seven Johnny Cra-pauds.

But however this may be, the French wines and their Bayonne hams, are most excellent. I see both in astonishing perfection in the next saloon, and therefore I will spare my sermon for a more appropriate season. Only, I will make this remark, now that I think I have to congratulate myself that the affair terminated as it did: if it had happened the other way, and Richards and his company had been descendants of the *grande nation*, there would unquestionably have been more intrigues than in our cabinets, and a great deal less of tranquillity.

I was kept for some hours by these benevolent feelings in a kind of *clair-obscur* picture, or as the Germans call it, a mental life. We had departed immediately after breakfast, having been informed by the reverend Padre Antoine, that our regular yearly guest, the yellow fever, had already visited some houses in the faubourg Marigny; and I hurried to see my friends above Baton Rouge, in order to hear their verdict about my new acquisition, face to face.

Plunged in thought, and with the aforesaid babbling acquisition on my arm, I went through the details of the *dejeuner*, the departure, and so on, in a revery. I forgot everything around me, so that I was even insensible to all those demonstrations of joy that were paid to us at our departure. I heard nothing of the nine shots which passed over the city of New-Orleans, when the steamboat started; nothing of the hurrahs with which some dozens of sailors saluted us as we were already turning around in the river. In short, I was indifferent to all the glory with which we passed up the father of waters. Arm in arm we were sitting on the sofa, behind the doors of the ladies' saloon; the tea-hour had long since passed, and the lamps had been lit in the saloons. We now walked and chatted, for the first time aroused from our reveries.

"A negro-killed!" was heard from the upper deck.

"A negro killed!" was shouted immediately from two, five, ten, twenty, and finally a hundred throats, followed instantly by a running, a rushing, a tumbling, a tramping, as if the two huge kettles were about sending us, and this immense floating hotel, into another world. Louise jumped up and drew me breathless through the ladies' saloon and the gentlemen's cabin, to the stairs which led to the upper-deck.

"Who is slain? Where is the poor negro?"

Instead of an answer, we heard the loud rough laughter of half a hundred backwoodsmen.

"Much ado about nothing, dear Louise."

And we were about to return, but the group became every moment more picturesque, as soon as the contours of the figures became clearer and more distinct by the light of the candles, torches, lanterns and lamps which were brought.

Indeed, this night-piece does not look bad! On the dividing line between the fore and aft deck, and in equal distance from stem and stern, stood a group which could not be met in our country again. It seems as if all the western states and territories had sent representatives on board of our steamer. Suckers from Illinois, and Badgers from the lead mines of Missouri, and Wolverines from Michigan, and Buckeyes from Ohio, intermingled with Redhorses from old Kentuck, and Trappers from Oregon, stood in the most lovely confusion before us, and in dresses which in the glare of the torches gave them the appearance of delegates from Pandemonium. One had a hunter's blouse of blue and white striped calico, which gave the broad-backed bearer the appearance of a tremendous, feathered walking cover; another made himself remarkable by a large straw hat, which looked like the chimney-roofs on our villas. Winnebago wampum girdles and Cherokee moccasins, leather jackets, made out of tanned and untanned deer-skins, with New-York dress coats, and red and blue jackets, formed here a perfect pattern-card of our national costumes. In the middle of this assembly was seen a personage, looking just like a fox which has been drawn out of his hole, and has to run a gauntlet through a rank of lively and joyous hunters: it was, indeed, a truly interesting Yankee specimen, as he was standing there, in contrast with these gigantic forms;—his air, menacing and earnest, and then again sneaking,

drawing up his face into an innumerable quantity of fox-like wrinkles, with a redish-gray bright eye, seemingly quiet, but always rolling; sometimes resting on the backwoodsman, and again thoughtfully squinting toward the cases of goods; the lips compressed; his whole thin but bony figure, in an attitude, which made it difficult to say whether it was better fitted for preaching, singing or school-mastering. The man might have been about thirty, and was as dry as leather. He had a roll of chewing tobacco in one hand, and a bunch of silk ribbon in the other, which he had taken from a half-opened chest, in which peddlers'-ware of every variety was visible. By the side of this chest were two others, and near them a crying negro, scratching alternately his right shoulder and foot, but evidently far from being on his road to eternity. As the Yankee raised his hand, enjoining silence upon the negro, his face gradually resumed that solemn, stiff and comic expression, which is the warning involuntarily carried in the countenance of one of these double-distilled Hebrews, that his southern brethren may be wary of him, when he is attempting to take quasi legal possession of their dollars and cents, by palming off some worthy equivalent. His movements, which were at first somewhat tremulous, soon became more assured; his hands began to move up and down, like the ominous motions of a telegraph; he cast a long glance on his two boxes, which, it appeared, had fallen down from the pile of goods, and upon the shoulder and foot of the negro; and as he looked with his half-menacing, half-pitying glance, now on the negro and then on his property, his compressed lips opened suddenly, and with a shrill schoolmaster's voice, he cried:

"Sambo! Sambo! what have you done? Sambo! Sambo!" and the man cried still louder, and his voice became more solemn, and he raised his hand, as if about to pronounce a judgment; and his look fell upon the negro, and thence again to the heavens; "Sambo! Sambo! misery! misery! a salvo! a wonderful salvo!" cried the man for the fourth time, pointing with a kind of holy fright at the box. "A salvo; may Heaven pardon you, Sambo!" he roared at once in a voice of thunder. "Sambo! you have endangered, and perhaps spoiled a salvo—against which all your salvos from Mecca, Medina and Bassora, or from wherever they come—from Algiers, Tunis or Tripoli, are nothing but blacking-paste. Sambo!" screamed the man, "if you were worth twenty Sambos; and if you could

twenty times be put up at auction, you could not pay for the mischief you have probably done. Wo! wo! wo upon you! if you have injured these two boxes. The loss which you have brought upon the community——”

“Boe! boe!” groaned the negro.

“Boe! boe!” cried the Yankee after him. “Just cry boe! boe! What need is there of your bawling? You are not alone here. Here are ladies and gentlemen, as fine as the cradle of our liberty, I mean Boston, could show them. There are a hundred glass, stone and tin boxes, and phials in this case; and if only twenty of them are damaged, I tell you, Sambo, your skin would not pay for them, even if it were twenty times as thick, and it could be sold twenty times over: I tell you your skin is not worth it. Ah, Sambo!”

“Boe! boe!” roared the negro.

“Hold your tongue!” cried the Badgers, the Redhorses and the Buckeyes. “Open the box! we’ll look at it ourselves.”

“Do you hear, Sambo!” cried the Yankee, “keep still, the gentlemen say. Hold your tongue,” continued he, with the impassable leather-face of the pilgrims of Plymouth. “Be quiet, I tell you; boe as much as you want, it will avail you nothing, you must pay. I’ll thank you for your long knife, Mister. That’s right: that’ll do. That knife opens, takes hold like first-rate steel; better so, than into the soft human flesh. That’s it; here they are, here they are—undamaged, whole, pure and unblemished. Praise be to the Lord! Raise songs of praise, psalms also; not one box broken, not a single phial damaged. Praise Heaven! I say; and if you had broken ten shoulders, and twenty legs; praise Heaven, for it will bear witness to your misfortunes. Witness the feeble arm of Jared Bundle; you shall see wonders! Down with you, Sambo! down with you, Sambo. I will help your shoulders, your skin; a blessing shall come over your black bones.”

Not a single feature had changed in the Yankee’s face, but his movements were like those of a man who is firmly convinced of his scientific acquirements. His look was occasionally slightly timid, as it glanced toward the increasing multitude around him.

“Down! down!” he cried again.

“Down!” cried the Kentuckians and Michigan men. “Down!” roared the Missouri and Ohio men.

“Be quick!” said he of Illinois.

“We’ll see the wonderful cures of the doctor!” cried the Oregon trapper.

Half-a-dozen bear-claws now caught the crying and roaring Sambo, and threw him on a pile of coffee-bags, like a pig destined to breathe its last.

“Boe! boe!” roared the black with all the strength of his lungs.

“You may ‘boe’ as much as you like!” was heard in the shrill voice of the Yankee. “You will change your tone when you feel, see, and experience what a Connecticut man can do. ‘Boe, boe,’ you cry; but what do you say to this, Sambo?” exclaimed the man, triumphantly holding a piece of linen spread with the salve, and immediately after, the box, filled with a greasy, dark-green substance, and looking very much like old blacking-paste, was stuck under his nose.

“What do you think, Sambo? Is this the stuff? Will that do, do you suppose? We’ll see, gentlemen!” he said, with the importance of a church-elder. “Gentlemen! the arms and legs of poor Sambo, do you understand? The arms must be stretched, and the legs be pulled, that the salve may show its whole effect. We therefore must stretch him—so pull away!”

And the backwoodsmen raised their arms, and began stretching the negro so much, that the poor devil screamed as if he was about to be killed.

“Boe, as much as you choose!” cried the Yankee. “Children who do wrong must be chastised, says the Scripture; it does them good; it is for their benefit. If your shoulder gets out of joint, the stretching is still for your benefit.”

“Boe!” cried the negro again, who was so torn by the bear-claws of the backwoodsmen, that all his limbs cracked.

“Boe on!” cried the Yankee, raising his voice to a higher pitch, and pasting the rags to the fellow’s black skin. “Boc along! You had better hold your tongue, I tell you; and if you had Dr. Brown, or Hossack, yes, even Silliman, their reason would stand still; they could not help you any more than a bowl of pea-soup. Boe along. It is great luck for you. Hold still, boy! Gentlemen, I thank you in the name of this unreasonable being. Thank you—that’s it—that’s enough. That’s right—there it is—now you’ve got it; pinchers could not tear it off. Boe on as much as you like, I say!” continued the man, as he stuck a second plaster into the foot. “Say; why do you bawl like a stupid beast? What is there to bawl at, man, when Jerry Bundle is present with his Palmyra salve? Who would be wailing in this manner, when the scent of the

Palmyra is near his nose? I'll tell you, dark gentleman, if your black legs were clear broken off, and if they were already half rotten, floating toward the Balize, below New Orleans—yes, if they came direct from the jaws of an alligator, and you stuck two pieces of this plaster on—I say, I, Jared Bundle say, your black legs would heal, grow fast to your black body, become flesh with your flesh, bones with your bones, as sure as my name is Jared Bundle. And it is true," he asseverated to the bystanders, with the most honest face in the world.

"I had Abner Sparks in Penobscot—you know, ladies and gentlemen—Abner Sparks, the son of Enoch Sparks, what married Peggy Heath. Good family, these Sparks; real good family, you know, ladies and gentlemen—downright respectable family, respectable business, in drygoods and groceries, and good hats, water-proof and patent; splendid tea and coffee-pots, and particularly good shoes, of the very last fashion. Now, ladies and gentlemen, do you want any particularly good tea or coffee-pots? Well, Abner Sparks says to me, 'You Jared Bundle,' says he, 'let me have a dozen boxes or phials of your Palmyra salve,' says he. 'Wonderful medicine stuff,' says he. 'What!' says I, 'let you have a dozen boxes of my Palmyra salve? maybe you think it is some of your vulgar apothecary stuff,' says I. 'What would the ladies and gentlemen on the Lower Mississippi say, if I was to part with my stuff here?' says I; 'the ladies and gentlemen must have it,' says I; 'they are my best customers,' says I."

"D—d humbug, Jared Bundle!" interrupted a Kentuckian.

"Spoiled blacking with dog's grease," said the man from Illinois.

"It is from the north," cried a third; "where they make wooden nutmegs and clocks."

"Where the locusts break their legs, when they jump from one potatoe-hill to the other," added a fourth.

"Where the robbers starve in harvest-time, and the mocking-birds forget their singing," continued a fifth.

"There is nothing that goes over Jared Bundle's wonderful salve!" cried the imperturbable Yankee, louder than all. "I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, it's the best, it's the very best salve in this universal world, for corns; and if the corns sat upon your toes as thick as the planters on the lower coast of the Mississippi, and if they were settled like the rocks in our blue

mountains, I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, Jared Bundle says it, put it on your corns—once, twice, thrice, four times; and they'll have to come out, root and branch; nothing to be paid extra, ladies, if you use them against freckles. Miss! Miss!" he cried to my Louise, "you have no freckles, but you might get some. For two nights a plaster on both cheeks, the best remedy against freckles."

"Hold your tongue!" I cried to the quack, "or I'll plaster you."

"We are in a free country, I calculate—free to sell or to buy," was his reply. "Gentlemen," he continued, "it is an incomparable paste for razor-strops—put it on twice, draw the razor across it, put it to the beard—magnetic power, I tell you, gentlemen. It will slope across your face, just as easy as a locomotive engine across a rail road; you don't know what becomes of your beard; it disappears just like grass, when a scythe comes near it, right clear off. There's virtue in that salve, a mighty deal of virtue, ma'am!" he cried to a lady, who, like ourselves, had watched this burlesque spectacle at a distance.

"But whom do I behold! as I live! it is Mrs. and Miss Dobbleton; one of our many neighbors from the Mississippi, below Concordia. Very happy to see you, Mrs. Dobbleton! Miss Dobbleton, your servant. I have the honor to introduce my wife to you."

But the compliments of our meeting were drowned in the voice of the Yankee.

"Ma'am!" he cried, a box in each of his hands—"Ma'am! the most approved remedy to keep sound teeth in good order, and to make decayed ones sound; only put a little of it between the teeth and against the gums, misses!—an excellent remedy against shortness of breath."

The two misses became green and blue with anger.

"Incomparable remedy," continued the man; "rub the parts a few times, and the tight breast becomes as wide as that of Miss Broadbosom, of Charlestown;—you know Charlestown, at, or near Boston? No doubt, it is a fact, ma'am," he cried, "a first-rate remedy against the lock-jaw, and any other damage, particularly against damage caused by splinters being run into toes. Ah! Miss Trollope had a pretty large mouthpiece—an excellent mouthpiece; was engaged to Mr. Schafer, but he came too late, two days too late, she had run a pine splinter into her foot, through her prunella shoe, and got a lock-jaw. Had she had my wonder salve, she'd be still alive—and be now Mrs. Schafer:

now there, you have the land crabs. A capital remedy against lock-jaw, ladies! Another example, ladies! Sally Braggs, Miss Sally Braggs from Portsmouth—you know Portsmouth? not far from Providence, where the pretty girls grow. They do say, those of Baltimore are prettier—and I won't say to the contrary—matter of taste, pure matter of taste; but Miss Sally Braggs, my dear ladies, had the lock-jaw, could n't utter a word, and she took a box of my Palmyra salve, ladies! two dollars per box, and now she talks, ladies—'pon honor, ladies, her mouth goes clap—clap—clap—like a steam mill. Incomparable remedy!"

In spite of the never ending speech, the Yankee had found time to attend to his trade with astonishing activity; his commodities found a quick sale, and the louder the laughter was, the oftener the dollars of the backwoodsmen came from their leather bags.

It was very amusing to observe how they alternately smelt the salve, and then looked again at the Yankee.

"Wonderful stuff!" continued the Yankee with unshaken gravity. "Excellent coffee-pots," he whispered to a man in a Missouri leather jacket, to whom he held out a tin coffee-pot. "I'll warrant it. Excellent stuff this Palmyra salve—arrived direct from Moscow, whither it was brought by the Grand Duke of Abyssinia, who was put in prison for debt. You must know it is an excellent harbor this Moscow, a first rate place for commerce; from there the salve came into the hands of the Grand Dukes of Teheran or Tombuktou, who lived somewhere about the Cape of Good Hope, when it arrived at Boston by the Sarah Larks. Ah, I was right after it—I only smelt it, to know which way the wind blew, and what time o' day it was. Ladies, you shall have the benefit, and for only two dollars; two dollars per box, ladies and gentlemen!"

"Ladies and gentlemen," the indefatigable Yankee concluded in his sententious manner, "I hold myself responsible to you, that this salve cures every sickness which is curable; and, as the celebrated Doctor Flathead asserted, that there exists only two kinds of sickness, of one of which people die, and the other, of which they don't die; you will see, yourself, of what great importance it is to have a salve like the Palmyra salve. Most excellent salve, ladies, two dollars per box, ladies!"

"Ladies and gentlemen!" he recommenced again, after recovering his breath, "do n't you wish some other articles, silks, Indiennes, calicoes, or fine spices, or nut-

megs? None of your walnut-wood stuff. Ah, ladies and gentlemen, Jared Bundle's tea and coffee-pots—permit me to recommend them to you! The tea, this excellent Chinese leaf, you know, it contains an oily substance, and it is said, and even by the most skillful physicians, that it is poisonous in the first year; but in my pots, ladies and gentlemen, it is no poison. I would be sorry, ladies and gentlemen, if you should believe that only the love of gain brought me here; but your good, ladies, your precious health, gentlemen, depend in a great measure on approved tea-pots; two dollars and a quarter per pot, ladies!"

"Ah, ma'am!" and he turned to one of the negresses who was looking over his ribbons. "Ribbons from the manufactory of Lyons, and handkerchiefs from Bengal, direct from Calcutta; they are excellent things, these handkerchiefs, but especially the ribbons, the widest in particular; a quarter of a dollar a yard. They keep the pores open, and promote perspiration. You know, ma'am, silk ribbons are made of threads, and these come from the bodies of worms; it is pure fluid, elastic fluid, and this fluid has many virtues. Four yards you wish, ma'am? Better take eight, then you get enough for twice. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, to return to the tea-pots —"

"The tea-pots!" roared several voices from below. "Hurrah! for the tea-pots of Jared Bundle! Look here! the tea-pots of Jared Bundle!"

And a procession of backwoodsmen, six persons strong, the steward in their midst, who carried the coffee-pot which the rascally Yankee had just sold for water-proof to the Missourian, came laughing and cheering up the stairs by the light of torches. The hot water leaked freely and in all corners and directions from the pot.

For a moment the whole crowd stood staring and gazing, but the Yankee trick soon began to excite the risible faculties of all.

"Jared Bundle! what do you now say to your tea-pots? Jared Bundle's tea-pots! A cheer for the Yankee tea-pots!"

The man had not lost his composure in the least. Earnestly, and without a motion in his features, he looked at the pot on all sides, all around, inside, and outside, shook his head, and finally began:

"Ah! gentlemen—or rather ladies and gentlemen! Who would refuse, in this happy land—this enlightened country of freedom, the most enlightened country in this world—to receive information of the

strange occurrence, which just took place before our eyes? Who would not desire this explanation? I'll give it, ladies and gentlemen; this explanation, in which I have only to regret I am obliged to tell you that there are gentlemen who sell tea-pots, and sell them for the south, when they are only fit for the north; and again, sell tea-pots for the north, which are only fit for the south, as is the case with these—which came from the store of the very respectable Messieurs Knockdown. These tea-pots, you must understand, have been made for the north, gentlemen, there is no doubt; for you know that many tea-pots could stand the cold of the north, but not the heat of the south; and that you are responsible for them only in as far as they have been made either for the north or the south. And I presume the cause of it is, that the gentlemen of the south are a very hot-tempered people, who eat their gougings for breakfast, just as we eat a mackerel. Now, we of the north have not so hot a temper, and the climate, mark me, governs men, and the tea or coffee-pots made for the north cannot possibly stand the heat of the south. I also wish to assert, that your boiling water is too hot, and this northern coffee or tea-pots could not stand."

"Humbug!" roared twenty backwoodsmen, and half-a-dozen drew nearer to the Yankee and his spurious goods.

"Boe! boe!" cried the negro once more.

"And are you here still, ye black devil?" said the peddler, turning to the negro. "Must you fill my ears with your infernal croaking? Do n't mind him, ladies and gentlemen, do n't notice the nigger. Who would look at a nigger? He is only crying for amusement: nothing but tricks—wants to have more salve on his back, but it's no go! Away with you, you highly perfumed snowball!"

"Perfumed snowball! now Massa Yankee say, 'perfumed snowball!'" shrieked Sambo, showing his teeth. "Matto never be perfumed," he cried, to the great amusement of the backwoodsmen, jumping to his feet, capering about, and grinning like a monkey; "Matto now be snowball nigger, and an hour ago he be dear Matto, and Massa Yankee promised him four picayunes, to let the heavy boxes fall on his shoulder and his foot. Boe! boe! Massa Yankee no good massa, bad massa."

And so it was. The inveterate rogue had concluded a regular contract with Sambo, to have the attention of his respectable fellow-citizens turned, in a very natural way, to his celebrated Palmyra salve.

Never had the risible faculties of the raw-boned backwoodsmen been more excited, at the disclosure of a so-called Yankee trick, than was now the case on board the Ploughboy. The laughter was tremendous, deafening and overwhelming; and the noise did not cease until the captain interfered, and told them, that it was the wish of the ladies that they should not punish the Yankee too hard, for his efforts to transfer their dollars to his pocket; after this declaration the Badgers and Buckeyes, and the Wolverines and Redhorses, became quiet. It was most amusing now to see how these rough sons of the west prepared to fulfill the wish communicated to them, with all the gravity of the backwoods etiquette.

They first sent a committee of two members to the ladies, with an assurance of their readiness to treat the Yankee as mildly as possible; and then they nominated a committee to inspect the spurious goods and their possessor.

Of the sold articles, piece after piece was examined, and either condemned or the sale confirmed; but the tea-pots were condemned without an exception, as they were better calculated for a long voyage on the Mississippi than to stand the boiling of Mississippi water. The magnificent Palmyra salve, on a slight examination, proved to be a composition of lard, ground powder, and blacking, scented with the decoction of walnut and tobacco leaves—most excellent against bedbugs, but very problematic as a remedy against freckles or lock-jaw. Both articles, and the different spices—among which was a large collection of nutmegs, made of walnut, were most formally presented to the Mississippi, after the money had been returned from the Yankee's pockets, into those of the backwoodsmen. In consideration of the real, republican stoicism which the Yankee had shown at the execution of his sentence, he was, in a solemn way, invited to "go a whole hog cocktail"—an honor which he seemed to appreciate fully, thanking them for it in a well-digested speech, in which he inquired, *en passant*, if some member of the company, a majority of which had but recently condemned his merchandise, could not help him to a place as schoolmaster, in their respective homes. I should not be astonished if the fellow, before bed-time, moved by the spirit, should give us a Methodist sermon. He seems just the man for it. But such they are—these Yankees, just as Halleck, in his Connecticut, describes them:

"Apostates, who are meddling,
With merchandise, pounds, shillings, pence, and ped-
dling ;
Or wand'ring through the southern countries, teaching
The A B C from Webster's spelling-book,
Gallant and godly ; making love and preaching,
And gaining, by what they call "hook and crook,"
And what the moralists call overreaching,
A decent living. The Virginians look
Upon them with as favorable eyes,
As Gabriel on the devil in Paradise."

A cheer for the worthy Mrs. Howard, was heard again as the party approached the gentlemen's cabin ; and then it became more quiet. I had invited these bears to drink *one* to the health of Mrs. Howard, and had told the steward to put the cocktails to my account. Mrs. Dobbleton, whose husband acts as secretary of a temperance society, made wry faces at this ; but to me it was a real pleasure. It has a particular charm for me, to be thrown suddenly among these wild, but hardy children of nature and liberty, who rise proud, strong, unshaken fathers of a hardy race ; these pioneers of the west, who till the ground for our children and grand-children, and future generations ; who clear forests and change the appearance of valleys. A few dollars, my dear Louise, sacrificed in this way, are never thrown away ; but become a chain to connect us with these our fellow-citizens.

CHAPTER II.

NIGHT-THOUGHTS.

WE had, meanwhile, passed *la côte des Allemands*, and were speeding toward the Acadiens. The night was cool and refreshing ; we had unanimously resolved to have our supper brought upon deck. There we sat, half-a-dozen of gentlemen, among whom were two Frenchmen, before the table, covered with light refreshments ; the quiet, light conversation was gradually inclining us to sleep—when our floating palace suddenly received a shock, which made every timber of the vessel tremble, and tossed bottles and glasses about at random. The two Frenchmen flew from their seats like play-balls : our ladies changed color and smiled, but in a manner that showed their hearts were fluttering—levity had vanished in an instant, and every one had become solemn and serious. One always experiences a peculiar sensation on these occasions ; a feeling, which even the strongest cannot avoid, that overpowers one against his will, as

soon as he knows that his strength finds its bounds, and that he is at the mercy of an invisible power with which he cannot trifle.

As we sat there, twenty feet above the rolling waves, which raged foamingly at our side, and looked down into a stream, three hundred feet in depth, and again threw our longing glances over the rich fields, stretching in a distance along the shore ; the terrible might was felt of that river, which rolls its immense masses of water wildly toward the all-devouring Gulf. The appearance of a fire-spouting steamer, which with the speed of an arrow came shooting down toward us in the distance, interrupted the silence ; and the deep-drawn breath of most of our company, betrayed the relief which the appearance of the approaching steamer afforded.

It was a beneficent sight ; a comforting feeling of security returned to every face, and increased, as alternately barks, flats, and keel-boats made their appearance, watch-fires burning on their decks, casting a most picturesque red glare across the boundless mirror of the water, while around the fires, yelling boatmen were singing a western song.

Yes ! it is a glorious stream, this Mississippi ; earth seems to bow before the mighty giant that proudly looks down upon it ; the plains and fields seem to retreat and sink into obscurity and insignificance. These plains are beautiful, worthy to be drawn by the pencil of a master ; but they sink into the shade before the stream itself.

The hay-moon has thrown its pale, silvery light over these, perhaps, the youngest children of creating nature ; a pale, gray magic veil is spread over the enchanting scene, and the light clouds of heaven seem to be reflected in it as in a mirror, in the distance. The cypress groves are piled on each other like walls of bronze ; a few light, silver flakes, unmoved by a breath of air, overspread the canopy of heaven. In the west, the golden purple is melted into a light green, and above us, ether is spread with the deepest blue—the stars tremble abashed before the queen of night, whose mild and gentle rays glimmer in the east.

Only here and there, lights shine along the shore, like will-o'-the-wisps dancing past us, lighting up, for a moment, the groups of orange and citron-trees. They glimmer from the bright windows of planters' houses, hidden behind the groups of trees. Perhaps there are fathers and mothers awake, who tell to their children or grand-children the adventures of their grand or great grand-parents, who have not the

least conception of the dangers which the storm threatens, and which might so terribly break over them. The children listen, and shake their heads incredulously, as if listening to nursery tales. Yes, these verities are difficult to believe—more difficult to describe—which our ancestors, the first settlers of our dear country, had to undergo.

These people were originally Germans, imported under the command of some Swedish or Dutch baron, to populate the new dukedom of Arkansas; for the notorious Law, and a company of dragoons, had been sent along to keep order and discipline among them. The card house of the Mississippi company was just falling to pieces, when these thousand unfortunates arrived in the pathless wilderness of Arkansas, and of course were dismissed from thought. Nine-tenths of them died in the forests, and on the way down the Mississippi; the miserable remainder succeeded in reaching New Orleans, and finally obtained permission to build their huts twenty miles above the city. And they built in sorrow and in misery, warring with floods, alligators and vermin; but their children and grand-children reaped the fruits of their labor, and live in peace and plenty under the ægis of liberty.

A hundred years ago, these regions of the stream must have presented an uninviting prospect. We, on the Red River, and our neighbors of the middle Mississippi, have some idea of the chaos, in which the whole of Lower Louisiana was buried at that time: but still, it is only a faint idea, as the stream farther up, in spite of all its power, finds its master in the higher lands, whom it only conquers at times of very high flood. Lower Louisiana, however, was almost entirely its subject; the same shores which now smile upon us so enchantingly, were an expanse of bog and slime, with millions of colossal trees piled up in it, which frequently obstructed the mighty course of the stream, and deluged the entire country with its waters.

Only the shrill cries of thousands of water fowls, the roaring and croaking of bullfrogs and alligators, interrupted the dreadful moaning of the waves. Yes; those were daring souls, who built the first cabins on these terrible shores. They are mementoes of the power of man, which the Frenchman may be proud of. To win battles, overthrow empires under a mighty leader; to destroy countries, subdue nations under a mighty yoke—demands no strong national spirit, no extraordinary power. The Huns, Tartars and Turks,

can do these things as well, perhaps better, than Europeans; under an Attila, Timour, Solymán, they have done it. But to settle, as a creating spirit, in a terrible solitude, a watery desert—to struggle with nature, with the wilderness, heat, cold, and the floods—to persevere in a strife, which no trumpets of fame proclaim to posterity, demands a genuine spark of the Promethean fire, and displays the unconquerable energy of man. If the Frenchmen had left no other memorial of their prowess than the settlement and culture of Louisiana, that alone would be all-sufficient to establish and perpetuate their fame. The history of the settlement of western Egypt, by the French government, was characterized by folly, error and levity, deserving more to be called the conceptions of an idiot, than the measures of an enlightened government, for the foundation of a colony; but luckily, the spirit of the French settlers was stronger than the levity of their rulers; and this spirit succeeded finally, in spite of the almost insurmountable obstacles which nature and rulers threw in its way, to lay the foundation for the civilization of a continent, which is certainly destined to play one of the most important parts in future history.

No! the Frenchman is not that dancing, frivolous Johnny Crapaud, which coarse John Bull would make him appear to the world; and, if he be not entirely what Uncle Sam and John Bull are—and he is not, as far as strength of will, and bold endurance are concerned—yet he has a virtue which you have not; a virtue which outweighs all your cold quaker virtues, and which is a real ethereal spark. It is the virtue of great and elevated feelings, pure, humane impulses. Yes; they were days of sorrow, those days of '80 and '81, when the fathers of the new liberty looked over toward the East, with hearts sickened by anxiety and hope! Their arms were almost lamed, their swords had become dull in the five years' struggle. They fought like men; but even men will finally fall before a greater power; and that power was terrible. Noble France then raised its powerful voice, and like a brother held out its hand to the exhausted swimmer—the worn-out warrior. That the thirteen stars at that time rose victoriously to the clouded skies, we may still, without diminishing our own greatness, thank that great nation. Yes; *mankind* may thank her for it.

Ah, how many grand-children of kings and sovereigns, perhaps sons, may hereafter rest in the shade of this liberty, and bless it

—the same liberty which is now the detestation of their fathers!

But the moon has disappeared behind the western forests, the landscape has sunk to rest, it is time to separate.

We have passed the *côte des Acadiens*. How enchantingly beautiful the pale silvery stripe draws along toward the north! They are the cypress groves, lit up by the last rays of the moon—a thin and mysterious light: it sparkles mildly, like the rainbow of the moon—mildly, like the eye of Providence, which guides the world! Perhaps it is the same silvery stripe, which lit the path of the poor Acadiens on their sorrowful wandering, when, eighty years ago, they pursued their thorny path for three thousand miles, from the coast of Nova Scotia. They were twelve thousand families, who, at the command of the Second George and his torries, were torn from their homes, their firesides, and their huts, because they would not fight against their fathers, their brothers, and *Louis Quinze*, their native king.

In the midst of winter, they were driven from their valleys, and plains, and fields, which their hands had redeemed from the wilderness. Men, women, old men, girls and infants, were chased by bloodhounds beyond the boundaries of their own country. Thousands froze to death, starved, or fell a prey to wild beasts. Only a miserable remnant succeeded in reaching, across the lakes and Illinois, the shores of the Mississippi, down which they floated on miserable rafts. On its shores and in the Attakapas, among their countrymen and the Spaniards, they found succor and a resting-place.

How wonderful are the ways of Providence! Only eighty years ago, our country was a forgotten corner of the earth, inhabited by a few hundred thousand families of poor colonists, upon whom even their own countrymen looked down with haughty contempt as a degenerate race, as less than the dregs of the great European system—regarded, even by the Britons, as the scum of the earth, and treated accordingly, while they were scarcely known by the rest of the world. Who would then, when these poor French Acadiens were driven from their huts by Britons and Anglo-American colonists, clad in skins—fighting under Webb against the French Montcalm, because their masters in Germany did the same—who would then have predicted that these same despised colonists, twenty years after, would found an empire which, in less than sixty years, would become the pride of mankind? which would

defy the mighty mother country, defeat it twice successfully in war, and take its stand among the mightiest nations upon earth? Sixty years more, and this empire may stand, perhaps, master of the world; and, in that beneficial reaction, which Providence has assumed as a principle in physical and moral government, oppose the mighty northern Colossus, which, equally obscure, though rougher and wilder in its origin, rose from the icy fields of the North, and stepped forward amid siege and carnage, ruin and death, stretching its gigantic arms, sometimes threatening, sometimes caressing, across Europe, while it panted under the convulsions of liberty. Yes, she pants, poor virgin Europe! she pants with all her might for this new birth; she hopes to bring forth a brighter and more glorious offspring than the world has yet seen. But ah! she forgets the mighty giant that must devour her child, and her sun sinks in the west, and dim twilight overspreads her, and her night comes on; while for us, the glorious morning arises!

"But the air becomes more damp. How? has the clock struck twelve?"

"You have wonderful night-thoughts, George!" whispered Louise, as we followed the train of ladies, going toward the cabin.

"Say rather, they are those of a cosmopolite. But who has not such thoughts upon such a day? and amid such scenes my dear Louise, she whose heart would not expand, must be a Jared Bundle."

"Another kiss, my dear Louise, and good night! To-morrow we'll be with Richards."

CHAPTER III.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS.

A BEAUTIFUL morning! The rich banks of Point Coupé shine upon us, and those of Baton Rouge disappear to our right; the red sun rises over the painted houses of the town, and in his fire-beams, arise the wonderful forests of this region of the stream, intermingled with plantations, which glide past us as bright, as brilliant, as refreshing as my own lovely Louise. We entered the bend of the river above Point Coupé, and here we saw for the first time a picture of the profusion of nature, the unbroken grandeur of its wilderness, a chaos of palmettos, magnolias, and liquid amber—cedar trees, chained together by those magnificent limes. The trunks, standing, prostrate,

falling—here and there a feeble willow, with torn branches waving in the wind, like the fluttering hair of an enraged old woman. Only the black bean-tree, with its thousand daggers and thorns, and the glorious live-oak, with its knobby arms, stand firm and powerful. Such a view gives force and energy. You feel more powerful; you derive more strength from God's regenerated world. "Look! do you see, Louise, that circle of magnificent, ever-green oaks which jut out in the stream, like a cape? Below it is the harbor to which we steer."

My words were drowned in the thunder of a gun, which was just fired; a second, a third shot followed; the Ploughboy went to the shore. There it is, this friendly plantation, modest, like the house of a country minister in old Virginia, and as domestic and comfortable. The roof is bent down as if with tongs over the galleries, which run on the sides of the house. The corner rooms on both sides are delicious hiding-places, dear Louise! One of the gigantic live-oaks has been left on the left wing, and the right is covered by a group of tulips. Fig and orange-trees hide it from the beams of the sun.

"So that is Clara? That's she!"

Louise fixed her eye-glass upon the wife of my friend, examined her closely, dropped her eyeglass, and looked inquiringly at me. To tell the truth, the mistress seemed to me also somewhat cool—yes, more than cool—frozen, when I compared her manner with the charming impatience which appeared so incomparable in her only eight weeks ago. She walks as stately, leaning on Richards's arm, to the landing-place, as if we had arrived with a cargo of woollen blankets for their negroes. She lifts, with almost fastidious grace, her lorgnon to inspect us. Louise looks inquiringly at me. Again three shots are heard, and Richards cries a welcome to us—but madam remains stiff and cold. Now we have arrived in the harbor—the gangboard falls.

"Welcome, dear friend!"

"Welcome, dear vagrant!" cries Clara, laughing; hardly taking the trouble of paying to our train a few indifferent courtesies. I had hardly time to take leave of my fellow-travellers, and to present a little remembrance to the boatmen, when she was asking me already thousands of questions.

"But tell me, my dear Howard, what is the matter with Richards? He returns here like a storm at two o'clock in the morning, and all the servants must get up, the rooms must be aired, the beds fixed,

and poultry, and Heaven knows what else is killed; in short, he raised a confusion, as if the hero of the eighth of January were to arrive here. Who are your companions? You arrive with a regular suite."

It almost appeared so to myself, and I only now remarked, that we arrived with a suite which would have satisfied any prince, travelling incognito, in any part of the world. Richards had taken my wife's arm, Julia had fallen to a pearl-colored Frenchman, Creole, or whatever he was, and the aunt Duras had engaged a nice young Frenchman for pilot. I had the little chatteress, who now shook me by the arm.

"But, for God's sake, speak! you are just like a stick. Who are the ladies? The youngest is a very nice little figure."

"Indeed!" I rejoined, dryly. "Do you like her? And you do not know her?"

"How should I?"

"The old lady is Madame Duras, the younger——"

She did not let me speak out.

"A very important Creole family; but what do they want here? I did not know that Richards was on intimate terms with them."

I looked at the good woman with large eyes, and could not well understand her. She received her guests with a cool and haughty air, and with a real Yankee face, she looked as if counting the sandwiches and the cups of coffee which our *dejeuner* would cost. Our Creoles do not like tea, and least of all in the morning. Hardly had she offered them seats and given orders to her black servants, when she came to me again.

"Dear Mrs. Richards," commenced I, somewhat excited, "I must ask you——"

But she did not permit me to come to an end; without any ceremony she took me by the hand, and dragged me into the next room, where she commenced:

"You are ubiquitous! everywhere and nowhere! Tell me, for Heaven's sake, where you have been? We really thought you had joined one of the caravans, which carry merchandise to Santa-Fé on mules. Not a single word was to be heard—nothing was to be seen of you. What did you do? You do not even deserve any consideration."

I did not know what to reply. She continued:

"Ah! you remain dumb! The guilt, the bad conscience, the shame, of forgetting your friends altogether. Oh, you men! now you are fire and flame, and in an hour again as wet as greenwood."

"A true backwoods comparison," I remarked, smiling.

"Now, as you feel your guilt, I will tell you that your punishment shall not be as hard as you deserve, that there is some hope for you; yes, more hope. You look at me, and you are astonished! 'some hope, I say—more than you deserve.'"

"But, dear Mrs. Richards! do n't you know then——"

I could in no way come to words, though I tried it hard, to give her some hints which were necessary—for Louise was in the adjoining saloon, and could hear every word, and see every motion, of the theatrical lady.

"I pray you!" she broke out again, "let me finish my sermon, and let me give you, in short, the assurance that your star begins to shine brighter."

"Shine brighter? star?" I inquired, still not knowing what she meant—for what husband, twenty-eight years old, recollects his amours of the last ten years, the day after marriage; or who has more than one idea in his brain?"

"And your heart does not tell you anything?" she rejoined sharply.

"Not a word."

"Not a word!" she cried, with astonishment. "Howard! not a word? Does your heart tell you nothing, indeed?"

But she was so stupefied, and looked so dissatisfied at me, with wide, open eyes, that I really became embarrassed. At last Richards came to my rescue; but as he took her hand and led her toward the door, she threw back a long and furious look at me.

I had hardly reëntered the saloon, when Richards invited her to show their rooms to her guests, to make the perhaps necessary morning toilet, and she returned to me again, whispering in my ear:

"And your heart does not tell you anything of Emily Warren?"

"Not a word," was my reply again.

She stood benumbed—speechless; and only returned to her consciousness, when Richards almost impatiently told her not to let the ladies wait so long. She now, for the first time, gave her hand to the aunt and Julia, and left the saloon with them; but in such a passion, that both must have had, at this moment, a high idea of the politeness of their hostess.

"But Richards," I inquired, "what is the matter with your wife? What is it? tell me!"

"In a moment, my dear Howard; only permit me to introduce you first into your rooms."

And saying so, he took the arm of my

better-half, and we entered the two corner rooms on the gallery, in which he installed Louise with all the gallantry of a true Virginian, and then retired.

"These are very nice little rooms, are they not, Louise? Excellent! the obscurity, with the streaks of light which fall through the blinds and the pea-green curtains, seems calculated for people like us. A swelling ottoman stands in the second room, with two nice bedsteads, in opposite corners."

"Indeed, very fine!" remarked Louise.

With my arm around the waist of the charming creature, we looked over the whole of the arrangements, which Louise thought were somewhat spoiled by the red pompadour sofa in the first room. We were just about to sit down on the ottoman, when the voice of the lady was heard again in high soprano.

"But that, Richards, cannot be done, absolutely. You know these rooms are the favorite resort of aunt Houston. Miss Menou will have the kindness——"

And with these words she opened the door.

"Bless us!" she cried, falling back terrified upon her husband.

"Bless us!" she cried again.

I stood arm in arm with Louise, and looked at her with astonishment.

"Bless us!" she cried for a third time.

"What is this?"

I laughed aloud. Not so, Louise, who hid her head in my bosom. Richards had played his wife a fine trick, not having told her a single word of what had happened. She still took me for the bachelor of eight-and-twenty, travelling after a girl.

"Madam!" said I, laughing, "do not become angry. I have the honor of introducing to you, Mademoiselle Menou, as she was called yesterday; to-day she has the unspeakable pleasure of being called Mrs. Howard!"

"Bless us! His wife!" she cried again, with a doubtful inquiry, and somewhat furious look at her husband.

The word stuck in her throat. I took Louise one step nearer to my angry, but lovely friend.

"I would not have it otherwise;" rejoined Richards, with a real diplomatic face.

"And have I not made a good choice, my most excellent lady?" inquired I laughing—Louise holding my mouth.

"And is it really Mrs. Howard?" she cried again, with as furious a look at her husband as if she wished to kill him immediately.

"Miscreant!" cried Clara.

"They are both miscreants, my dear madam!" said Louise, with a glance full of soul—with such a silver voice, and such an agreeable French accent, that Clara's eyes beamed brightly.

For the first time her looks were directed exclusively to my wife, for a moment, with a scrutinizing glance; but as the sun breaks from behind a lowering cloud, so was the face of the lovely being brightened with unequalled joy, as she clasped my wife in her arms.

"As a punishment, I will appropriate her entirely to myself. Indeed, you do not deserve the lovely angel."

"She will not be thankful to you for that," I rejoined, as the interruption was not quite agreeable to me. But both had already disappeared behind the door.

The joke was played pretty well, and I was the more satisfied with it, as I found in it an easy punishment for Clara, for she had evidently played the part of a little traitor.

"But who comes here? whom have we got? By Jove! It is Doughby, who comes rolling in his tandem, in a sober, domestic manner! How strangely matrimony changes a man! don't you recollect Mr. Doughby, Richards? he always drove upon the jump, with a pack of half-wild bull dogs at his heels. Now he sits in his gig, and seems as low spirited as if his goods and chattels were under the hammer of the sheriff. He really looks afflicted."

We went to meet the poor boy on the piazza.

He did not, as formerly, jump out of the curricule with both feet at once, but he slowly lifted the leather, and grumbling, threw the reins to the negro, who had come to take care of the horse.

"Ah, Mister Howard! You here once more!"

These words were not spoken in a very friendly tone. There was a disagreeable sneer playing around his mouth. I was in the most exquisite spirits in the world.

"Doughby!" I cried to him, "you look as serious as a major, who sits upon a court-martial."

"What is the matter? Ah, this dear matrimony! Permit me to pay my congratulations."

Doughby's brows were drawn together, his forehead wrinkled, and the corners of his mouth ever hanging down, with a still more insolent expression. He looked at me from his unprepossessing and half Irish eyes.

I observed him attentively, and said:

"The honey-moon does not seem to have agreed with you."

Richards winked, and pulled me aside.

"If Mr. Howard's allusions are intended for me," began Doughby, and his voice was like the distant rolling of subterranean thunder, "then I must ask him to change the topic."

"Allusions to you, Doughby? Do you object to such allusions?" I cried in the gayest tone. "What are you thinking of, my good boy?"

I was, as I said, in my best temper. Mrs. Richards soon joined us.

"Good morning, madam! But I only say," he drawled slowly to me, "that I don't want any allusions, from whomsoever they may come."

The affair appeared to me still more strange. The plebeian seemed to take a pleasure in trying me. I will be even with him soon.

"No allusions, dear Doughby!" I continued in the same laughing way, "what do you call an allusion? just give me a definition, a reason—a reason, good boy, as Shakspeare hath it."

"To the devil with your Shakspeare," cried the unrefined Doughby, who seemed now to be seriously angry.

"Stop, Doughby!" rejoined Richards, putting his fingers over the crazy fellow's mouth; "stop! there are misunderstandings existing here, which might lead to disagreeable disclosures."

"I only say," repeated Doughby, "that I do not permit allusions."

"Misunderstandings, which could lead to disagreeable disclosures—permit no allusions," said I, in a little more serious tone; "either Richards or yourself had better tell me all; you can't expect from me, that——"

"Stop!" cried Richards again, "what I wrote to you about Doughby was mere fun."

"Fun!" roared Doughby. "And who dares to write fun about me?"

"I, most omnipotent sire!" said Clara, laughing, stepping right before the square-built fellow, and taking one of his giant fists, which he withdrew. In that moment he might have personified a mad buffalo, irresolute upon which of his adversaries he shall first try his iron skull.

Clara took him once more by the hand, turned him around, and ordered him to put on his Sunday face, to offer Mr. Howard his best wishes for his marriage, which had been celebrated yesterday.

The man first fixed a staring gaze at the mouth of the gentle speaker, from which

he withdrew it as suddenly as if she had swallowed a quarter-dozen boxes of the celebrated Palmyra salve; then he measured me with his eyes, but said not a word.

I laughed.

"But, for Heaven's sake!" she cried, "have you lost your speech altogether? Don't be a half horse, half alligator! Can't you be civil? Just repeat after me—'respected Mr. Howard! I congratulate you from all my heart!'"

"And is it really true?" Doughby commenced at last. "And you are really——?"

"In the yoke of matrimony, dear Doughby, since yesterday, and in as pleasant a yoke as ever a two-legged animal carried. But come into the saloon, I'll introduce you to my wife."

And at once the man became friendly, shook my hand heartily, and broke out into a strain of congratulations, that seemed to me to be endless.

"Doughby?" I interrupted him. "We stay here to-morrow, and the day after, and on Saturday morning we go to my plantation, to which you are invited also: Richards and his lady will accompany us."

"Done!" interrupted Doughby. "I am of the party—for without it I should be in a fix I tell you. I'm used up, I sha'n't live long; it can't hurt me at all events, to see your Red River bottoms—I thought of going there long ago."

"He is used up," laughed Richards—"he won't live long—but still wants to see your Red River bottoms."

"And now come along, that I may introduce you to my wife."

We entered the saloon, but it was empty, the ladies were probably occupied with their morning toilet. Louise had also retired.

As I entered the dimly lit apartment, and beheld her charming figure in the pride of youth, with the smile of love on her lips,

'There stood the maid,
Silent and motionless,
With eyes on the ground
Abashed by the reflection of herself.'

As her swan-like neck bent over me, and her warm, soft arms rested on mine, I thanked Heaven, that in spite of my numerous losses, I had kept my greatest treasure, and could honestly stand before the eyes of this serene creature, who had given herself up to me, heart and soul. It is because the wife is united to the husband, in indissoluble chains, and that for ever! that if she finds him contemptible, feeble on the point where the man should be the strongest, if she finds her sweetest

hopes betrayed, then the benediction of the priest is all in vain.

We had forgotten Doughby, and all around us, and were sinking arm in arm, as the door of the front room opened again, and two ladies came directly into the room in which we were sitting. I jumped up and opened the door. It was Mrs. Houston, and a young lady with a veil covering her face. The former threw a slight glance at me, as soon as she saw the figure of Louise; the other lady withdrew quickly from the room to the gallery. I looked somewhat astonished at the lady, and, to tell the truth, a little angry, at this new fashion of paying visits in the rooms.

"Bless us!" cried Mrs. Houston, placing herself directly before me, "we are wrong. Where are Mr. and Mrs. Richards?"

She seemed unwilling to know me.

"You will most probably find them in the saloon," was my reply.

They had, meanwhile, returned with the company from a morning promenade, which they had taken through the plantation, and came now running toward us.

"Aunt! dear aunt!" commenced Richards, laughing; "you look just as if you did not know our dear Howard any more!"

"Bless us!" cried the good aunt, with a glance into the next room.

"Ah! Mrs. Houston!" I commenced, laughing and displaying my teeth, "good morning; I am very glad to see you in such good health, and so cheerful."

"Mr. Howard—" commenced the lady, solemnly—

"Has the honor of introducing to the respectable Mrs. Houston, his new-married wife."

With these words I stepped back, and presented Louise to the old lady.

"Demoiselle de Menou yesterday; to-day Mrs. Howard," said Richards.

"Louise de Menou, who, I can assure you, aunty, is a lovely little woman, worth kissing," continued Clara, heartily embracing her friend.

For one moment, the principles of good and evil were struggling visibly in her bosom. It was evident that she was sorry to lose this excellent opportunity of exposing us in her circles as deserters; and of telling the story over and over, after her fashion; but after a short conflict, the good principle conquered.

"Ah, your lady?" responded she, doubtfully, looking on Louise, and then on me.

"I wish you happiness, with all my heart," she continued in an obliging tone,

which gradually changed to a respectful one, as she took my Louise's hand.

"A very respectable family, a very good family, the Menous and the Durases. I have the honor to know Madame de Duras. A very important family, the Durases and the Menous—I congratulate Mr. Howard—a very important family."

And the good lady was changed at once, and changed as the oldest aristocrat only can be, if the supposed plebeian, with whom she comes in collision, proves to be even a little more than an equal in birth; for, *en passant*, it may be remarked, that, although the father of Mrs. Houston was a member of Assembly in Annapolis, the genealogical passports of her grandfather were not entirely unexceptionable. Indeed! we begin already to keep pretty strict genealogical tables.

"But who is the other lady?"

She had turned away, when I came out with Louise, and permitted her veil to fall down again.

"Whom do you mean?" asked Richards. "Miss Warren?"

"Miss Warren? Is not she Mrs. Doughby? But where is Mr. Doughby? Where is he?"

I looked around for him, but he was gone.

"You will hardly find him. He took his leave as soon as he saw Aunt's carriage with Emily, who is not Mrs. Doughby."

"Not Mrs. Doughby? but you wrote to me—"

"A joke, by order of my wife and of aunt, which was calculated for a surprise. The affair yet took another turn, and I hope the best one for all parties. As for Miss Warren, she is single still; the marriage was broken off—"

"Broken off?" I repeated seriously, and many strange thoughts crossed my embarrassed phantasy.

At the same moment, Clara and the young lady entered the room hand in hand, in which Mrs. Houston and my wife were sitting. It seemed to me as if she had become ten years older; the lively elasticity which gave her appearance something graceful, had given place to a stiff, matron-like air, and apathy had settled upon her blooming countenance. The inflexible, intellectual, chilling expression of the Northerners was reigning in it. I complimented her, and she thanked me as coolly, as if there had never been any intimacy between us. Her face was like marble.

Various thoughts had passed through my mind, when Richards beckoned me to

the gallery. I had for eight weeks been absent from my friends, and during this short time a large net of misunderstandings and discords had been woven, and probably new threads and plans were spun, of which I was about to catch the guiding string.

"I should very much like to see," began Richards, "if we could get the aunt and Emily to join us in our journey to visit you."

"How now? take Emily along?"

This proposal astonished me.

"Wouldn't it appear indelicate, dear Richards, under the circumstances in which I formerly stood to Emily?"

"Circumstances in which you stood to Emily Warren—circumstances, George! You don't mean, I hope, that little flaw which you kindled up when you was here last, and which I would pardon in a young scamp of eighteen, but never twice in a man of twenty-eight? Console yourself, that your sentimental flames did not bring about the injury you intended. No, there are altogether other things in her head, and I wish we could do something for her."

"But how? how do you mean? Speak out! Indeed, I do not know how to understand all these secrets—all these discords."

"Another time you shall hear more of it; but although Doughby formerly did not deserve Emily's hand, I now wish to see the breach repaired. And I believe it can be done, since, on your part, all hope of Emily is lost."

"You are really a wonderfully matter-of-fact people. Just now you told me that Emily does not care a straw for me, and now—"

"I tell you, that if you were single, Doughby could never have the least hope. Emily is a good girl, an industrious girl, who, like all other girls, wants to get married—must—shall; and who is far above all sentimental foolishness, because it never leads to an end."

"She is just like all northern women. We will give her every opportunity to become intimate with Doughby. And as this can best be the case on your plantation, we must try to get Mrs. Houston to accompany us, which will also be advantageous and profitable in another point of view: as giving the best opportunity of introducing your lady into our best circles, and thereby into the best in the union. You know aunt is a leading character, very popular among the higher planting world in Louisiana, and the oracle of all; and her approval will secure to you that of the county and the State."

"Her approval? that is strangely spoken, dear Richards. I think that I do not want the approval of either Mrs. Houston, or of the county, for the steps I choose to take. I need it the less, too, as neither myself nor my wife intends to run for Congress or the Assembly."

"But you wish to enter good society."

"From which, I hope, I have never been excluded!"

"But your wife has not been introduced yet—this has first to be done; and you know, although of very good family——"

"Is only French, you mean to say, Richards," I interrupted. "Now I will tell you my meaning, shortly and unceremoniously. I am very far from fighting against any prejudice, which the sovereign people may have inclosed in their brains, but I will not bend before them for ninety-nine different reasons: of which the first is, that I do not want them, and shall never be in want of them, being independent myself, and hoping to remain so. And whoever withdraws his company from me, will see me withdraw my company from him."

"This is all display—a very fine, noble and proud spirit, dear George; but, pardon me, childish and partial. If you want to live among, and with your fellow-citizens, and not retire altogether among your half-civilized stupid Creoles, of whom only a few are Menous, then it is your duty to take the first step. This mark of respect society demands from you, and she has a right to ask it; and it will meet you as soon as you have done it, and leave you, if you fail to do it. And why should you not consent to pay this mark of respect, having now such a beautiful opportunity for it?"

"You are right!" was my answer. "Do what you think best, and what will bring the affair to an end. I shall be happy to help Miss Warren in anything."

"That was spoken reasonably. Now I must go and see my people."

I had to acknowledge that he was right, although I hated these formalities, these introductions, these etiquettes. Among free citizens, neighbors who are acquainted for years, yes, even from childhood, these formalities are insupportable. Yes, there is a defect in our social system, a palpable defect; every one attempts to throw the web of aristocracy more and more over the country. Stay on board of a steamboat for days and weeks, in a hotel or at table, and if you have not an intercessor who introduces you to your neighbor, you will pass mute by each other, sit mute side by side, and after a fortnight you will

not have spoken together more than two words.

No nation in the universe has so stiff an appearance as ours, and especially our good families; for, thank Heaven! our middling classes, the real nation, knew nothing of it. But our aristocracy—that is, those who would like to be it—if it depended on them, our popular independence would soon be destroyed. Clubs, divisions, and subdivisions run over each other, from Maine to the Gulf of Mexico, like spider-webs. The man who has a hundred thousand dollars, will not condescend to look at the one who has fifty thousand; and the latter is as arrogant toward him who has only ten thousand. You are just as respectable as you are heavy. And this, too, is one of John Bull's beautiful legacies. Bah! we'll see what time will bring forth. Ours is a wonderful nation; but we have our inconsistencies, as well as others.

But—our dear fellow-citizens are not really so bad, and their ladies are better still; and under circumstances like the present, we see plainly what it is to be a respectable member of community. Respect for the rights of the citizens, speaks nowhere so openly and so strongly as among us. It is true, it demands respect to society—a respect which changes sometimes to stiffness. It enforces respect for itself, when it is not given; but we pay it, too, in full measure. I was surprised, as was Louise also, whose feelings are more sensitive than mine. A constant succession of fêtes and festivals were given us by our friends. What do I say—friends? Nay, even those with whom I had lived on terms of indifference vied with each other in civility. We went from one house to another—from one festival to another; and I was almost touched at the manifest zeal of all to please us, and to receive us to our satisfaction.

Above all, Mrs. Houston behaved with great delicacy. She gave us a splendid and costly fête, and exhibited a tender kindness of which I thought the old lady incapable. Not a trace of the former scorn, of that old repulsive countenance, which made her formerly so disagreeable to me. She had something so confiding, she played the amiable hostess in such a friendly manner, and affected to be so much flattered by our presence, that it seemed as if she were showing my wife the respectability of an American society. She received our invitation with thankfulness, so that I repented of the bad opinion I had entertained for her.

Yes, indeed, it is a pleasure to be an American—a link of the chain whose rings;

taking them altogether, are so little gnawed by the rust of selfishness. Good humor lights up every countenance. No, Uncle Sam is not the grumbling old egoist the world would have him, nor a morose miser, who for ever knits his brow, and thinks and studies only how he can possibly gather the greatest number of dollars. It is a source of great satisfaction to me, to be able to give Louise such flattering accounts of my countrymen. She used formerly to call such descriptions hyperboles.

She had not conceived a very flattering picture of Uncle Sam, as she only knew him superficially; for Uncle Sam is not fond of introducing himself, and sometimes at hearing my praises she yawned as others do, when they are stuffed to satiety; for we are certainly fond of praising and glorifying our country—for ever and ever, day and night, standing or going, riding or driving, drunk or sober, she is our bride, with whom we pass the honeymoon; a cross look from a third person, invariably spoils our temper. No one but an American can understand or comprehend this love. He calls it apeish love; he is annoyed at it if we prefer our light to others; he laughs at and scorns us for the love we bear our country, because it is entirely different from the love he feels toward his own, which he knows resembles the United States in no particular.

We willingly acknowledge this, for Uncle Sam's country is still a new property; it has none of the proud and frowning castles, the white halls, beautiful parks, grottos, and gothic domes of old England. It has not the ivy-covered two-thousand-years-old obelisks, pantheons, and coliseums of the old Roman land, or the delicious vine wreaths of *la belle France*; it is merely, as we said, a new property; with new buildings and new fields, only recently redeemed from the wilderness, and where the master, even had he been inclined, has not yet found time to think of halls, domes or grottos. In comparison with older domains, this property is homely and plain, but more productive than many older ones which have been longer cultivated. In addition to this, it is our own property, our plantation, upon which we look with the pride and love that a father does upon his family, and the household which he has laid out himself—planted his own trees, sown his own seed. There we have a home, upon which no debts, no taxes, and no duties rest; a freehold in every respect, which does not belong to great masters, emperors, kings, dukes, counts, or whatever they may be called; where we are

not mere serfs, daylaborers or tenants, who reside in a cellar or attic, from whence we might any day be sent to Botany Bay or the Conciergerie, should we have a mind to kill a rabbit that sits in our way, with a stick, or to call Johnny* a booby.

It is our own property, and for that reason we love it; as a good, kind father is much more proud of his simple house and field, which he raised and improved himself, than his rich neighbor, who is merely a tenant of a rich country seat.

We will, perhaps, again resume this subject when we have more leisure.

CHAPTER IV.

A KENTUCKIAN, AS HE IS AND LIVES.

THOSE were three glorious days which we passed in the lap of friendship, the more glorious, as because they were not prolonged into four; for the fourth could probably not have passed without indigestion, or a fever, as the thermometer was ranging between 95° and 100°. No: our festivities were sufficiently prolonged; and after three such days, a Mississippi or Red River trip is the pleasantest thing in the world. One is full of life, and brings a spirit on board the steamer, as buoyant as that of a bird. We were all in high glee, our company being inspired by the Muses and the Graces. But let us see how many heads we muster on board.

There is Mrs. Houston, but not Mrs. Houston of former times. A friendly smile plays around her mouth, which imparts something particularly humorous to her somewhat hard Scotch features. Then there is aunt Duras, a particularly strange figure, with some little perfidy in the light-blue French eyes, but all delicacy and finesse; a remnant of the French high school of *Louis Quinze*, the *chronique scandaleuse* of which she can recount on her fingers, as if she had been actually present. The two ladies are now promenading through the ladies' cabin, the American walking about firm, decided, like one of George IVth's life-guardsmen; the Frenchwoman, however, has a peculiar tournure of her own, quite different from the other. We can always tell the country of a woman's birth, by her walk. Behind them come Louise and Miss Warren, who are already very intimate. Around the features of the latter there is an ex-

* John Quincy Adams

pression it would be difficult to define—something like melancholy, and again like apathy; particularly the lips of the fair creature are so compressed. Clara and Julia are together, looking at each other, serious as ladies of thirty, and somewhat sleepy.

The clock strikes six, and we were up and together in good time, because the Alexandria, which is said to be a fast boat, was to reach Alexandria soon after five. But to return to Julia; the poor child had what we call the *blue devils*. She is and acts at times like one of Paulding's elegies. The poor girl has cause, for she is two years older than Louise, and with no matrimonial prospects. Certainly there are some beaux to pass the time with, but they are not of much account. One is a Creole cousin by the name of Merwin, a New Orleans lawyer and fashionable man, belonging to the élite; but he must have visited the quadrone balls more frequently than the Court rooms. His face is the color of West's "Death on the pale horse;" the girls sometimes cast a glance at the poor man's figure, and then, half-shuddering, turn away. The second cousin seems to promise more. He is just imported from *la bella France*; a sort of political genius, said to possess an immense quantity of liberal ideas and republican systems—after the latest Parisian fashion.

This currency will scarcely make his fortune with us, for we prefer the real, to the jingling one; or, if it is paper, we like an inluster upon it. This rattlehead had been *redacteur en chef*, Heaven knows of what kind, yellow, red, blue, or green; but which, after the fashion of their changeable masters, must have played him a trick—for the young champion of liberty had to clear out from *la belle France*, and in such haste that he forgot to pay two thousand francs, which the *procureur du roi* had to demand of him for lodgings in the Conciergerie. The young man, however, is not so bad, with his sparkling black eyes and hair, and light brown Andalusian face, full of life and fire. He recites Talma, and has been at school with the two dukes of Chartres and Nemours. Of these heroes in embryo, he tells sufficient stories to furnish matter for six volumes to some modern Plutarch. What splendid boys these must be! Real Brutuses! What respect they have for the rights of their fellow-citizens! and their papa, what warmth he must feel for the honor of France, and how he sighs at the sight of church government! How he would bring back the golden days of liberty—another kind of

liberty than that which we have! I listened, *en passant*, to the effusions of this young man, and could not help laughing heartily at them. To tell the truth, these Frenchmen, in politics and plain common sense, are real children, who will never grow to maturity. Attack their weak side—their boundless vanity—and you may ride them like a hobby-horse. Now they are gone mad with this papa of the pupils of the Polytechnic School, and would prefer him for their universal papa, in the place of the old Charles. And if they get him, they might fare like the Irish shoemaker in Franklinton, who used to say of his better half, "My wife! my wife! By St. Patrick! nobody would have her, and yet I caught her!"

This good man calls himself De Ver-gennes, and is the third son of a Gascoigne vicomte, and nephew of a peer, who has one of the most important offices at court; and once every eight days has the honor, at the petit levée of his most sacred majesty, to help him either into his stockings or inexpressibles, I do not remember which. When I expressed my astonishment that he, the son of a lieutenant-general, and nephew of a peer, should have gone over to the opposition, or what is worse, to the fatal liberalism, he said, with real French naïvete: "*Ah mon frère a pris l'autre côté, mais nous autres.*"

I expect a great deal of amusement from this young man, whom father Menou has invited. Among the visitors who honor us with their presence, Frenchmen of the present day, I mean of 1828, are by far the most amiable. With an education by no means superficial, nay, even profound in practical, particularly mathematical, sciences, they unite the modesty which, with their natural enthusiasm, makes them appear most original and romantic. Even as the ancients travelled to the temple of Jupiter Ammon, hundreds of these men thus do pilgrimage to our country. And they are not the scum and dregs that come from other countries to us, but sons of the first families—to strengthen themselves in their political creed and hopes. A certain sadness, a hidden sorrow, a kind of shame at the degeneracy in which they believe themselves and *la belle France*, is visible in their features; then they bite their lips when they speak of the strange bayonets and baggage-wagons, which their present potentates have brought to them.

Be this as it may, it does not concern us; still I would observe, *en passant*, that, according to my humble opinion, *la belle France*, which forced upon its neighbors

sovereigns, fit and born for anything but potentates, has no great cause to complain that the Bourbons were brought back; to whom, say what you will, they have reason to be thankful that they are one great nation, and not twenty little states; and who still possess more right and title to be their masters than any others, be they who they may. And *la belle France* must have a master, and that a strong one.

Where three or four millions possess almost nothing, three others a little more than nothing, and only a small majority the necessities of life, while a few lucky hundred thousands amass superfluities; although the civic institutions may be liberal, and should be so, their's must also be entirely different from those of a country where nine-tenths are landholders, whose interests are the same, and whose political opinions must be nearly, if not perfectly, uniform. Here democracy, citizen government is possible; there it is absolutely impossible, my dear Vergennes.

As I looked upon the young republican, perorating during the entire breakfast, the observation again entered my mind, which always forces itself on me, when I see a so-called republican of the old world—we always understand Europe by the old world—attempting to define his very difficult position. One observes immediately, that these people play a part not natural to them; that the republican dress which they wear is not made for them, that they have not worn it from childhood, that it is either too tight or too wide for them, and that they commit a thousand follies and absurdities in it.

Even John Bull, when he puts it on, looks so awkward, that every reasonable man must pity him. It is a good dress, our republican dress, a warm dress, which fits us comfortably, but is only fit for us—republicanism only becomes Americans. If we see one dressed in it, for whom it is not made, it disgusts us, and that is pretty much the case here. This young Frenchman, so polite, so well-informed upon other subjects, seems a real madman when he speaks of republican institutions, not possessing the remotest idea of the right of property, the basis of republican welfare.

He would not hesitate to butcher a few millions of the noblest citizens, upon whom rests the culture of an empire of mankind, simply to realize his mad conceptions of equal property, and to raise a few millions of lazy abortions, to torment mankind far more than the most arrogant and tyrannical aristocrats.

While I was communicating to this

French quasi-republican, who seems to be a nice young man, as moderately as possible some of our American republican views, we had passed the Atchafalaya, and had taken the side of St. Francisville, to avoid the strong current caused by the influx of Red River, on the other side. A strong breeze which had sprung up, raised the waves in the midst of the stream to a considerable height. The main stream, though it was already August, was full to the bank, and the mouth of Red River, as far as the eye could reach, showed a large lake, from which millions of trees seemed to rise. We had left the saloon to look at this immense mirror of a lake, and admire its grandeur.

We were just approaching the mouth of Red River, when a boat crossed over from Woodville, and had already approached within a hundred yards, ere the watch on deck observed it. It passed through the numberless floating logs and trees with a swiftness and a daring, which to us, who were near the middle of the stream, seemed almost madness.

"That fellow is mad, or in love!" cried the captain. "On my soul, that fellow has more daring in the water than a commodore!"

"That is Doughby," cried Richards. "Captain, that's Mister Doughby. Turn to, it is he."

And it was he. The madcap stood in the boat, which danced up and down amid the logs, as straight as an arrow, scarce bending to either side. The six negroes, who rowed it, were wet through from the splashing waves.

"Then this is your much praised Red River!" he cried, approaching us. "A great country for wild ducks, geese, and alligators—hurrah, boys!"

"For Heaven's sake, Mr. Doughby, desist!" cried and prayed the ladies, when the madman just pulled in astern of us, without waiting the turn of the steamer. In an instant he caught the rope that had been thrown to him, which the next moment pulled him from his boat, throwing him like a featherball to the side of the steamer. A high wave had thrown back his boat, and Doughby hung half clear of the water.

"Pull away! hurrah, boys! Pull away, you villains, or the steamer's wheels will do it for me!"

"Pull away!" we all cried. "For Heaven's sake, pull away!"

"Yes, pull away!" cried Doughby, who had climbed up by the side, thrown him-

self with one leap across the railing, and stood in the midst of the sooty firemen.

"We hurried down to see him, for the feat had been a tremendous one.

"Pshaw!" cried Doughby. "Steward, something warm; and, captain, see that my portmanteau comes up, and that my niggers are safe. A good morning, gentlemen; in five minutes we shall see each other again!"

Saying this, he emptied the glass the steward had brought, made a slight bow toward the upper deck, hurried to the gentlemen's cabin, and into the first open state-room.

"There you have him," grumbled Richards, shaking his head. "That's the way he always makes his entrance—and Emily gets so angry at it!"

Angry is not exactly the word; but it was that quiet, silent, New-England antipathy, mixed with a strong dose of apathy, which had overmastered the girl, and seemed to give hope of anything rather than a reconciliation. These Yankees can hate so quietly, so bitterly, so calmly, mind ye; while, under the calm exterior, is a glimmer like that of their own Lehigh coal!

We had returned to the ladies' cabin, which we had left on hearing Doughby's name called. Clara put her finger to her lips, and looked most wise, as she took her seat on the sofa. Mrs. Houston was exactly at her post. Both stroked back the child's locks, and arranged her collar. She had on a light Circassian riding-habit for her travelling-dress, which became her exceedingly well. Louise watched every motion, like a most attentive pupil.

"Ah, Emily," begged the little viper, with her kindest smile, "you must to-day do me a favor: you must——"

"I'll not promise until I know what it is," replied the young lady in a pretty severe tone.

A threatening glance from Mrs. Houston seemed to have no effect on the little obstinate lady.

"Poor unfortunate!" began Clara, "whom your anger banished from your presence, and whom one of your smiles would delight beyond——"

She had not finished, ere Emily became deadly pale.

"Clara! if you love me—for mercy's sake! You——"

She did not conclude, but bit her lips in rage.

"But, Emily!" interrupted Mrs. Houston, in a real duenna tone—"but, Emily,

I really don't know whether politeness—whether your conduct——"

She could not end her speech, for our presence closed her lips; but her face presented a categorical imperative.

The young lady looked at her aunt, and her lips compressed still closer; an icy coldness seemed to come over her; she shuddered as if shaken by an ague. The struggle within her was very perceptible, but not a tear escaped her eye. The girl appeared strange, almost unwomanly to look at, in her mute sorrow. I rose, and hurried toward her. On seeing me, she made a convulsive motion, and said:

"I am certainly very miserable!"

She uttered this with a power, a voice, which had a strange, gloomy sound. Sorrow, pain, anger, injured womanhood, all sounded in that unnatural tone of voice.

"Miss Warren!" I cried.

She stared vacantly at me. Her face was ashy pale; her lips blue; she looked like a statue.

"Good Heavens!" she cried, with the same internal shudder. "Have I then become so unworthy of every consideration?"

"Miss Warren, how can you think so? On my soul, I know not what is occurring or what has occurred. Richards, tell me!"

Mrs. Houston sat there coldly. Clara was silent, holding the girl in her arms.

"To bring me again together with this barbarian!" she exclaimed furiously.

"Which barbarian?"

She did not pronounce the name, but the deepest horror was expressed in every feature.

"It is not Doughby?" I asked quietly of Richards.

"And who else?" she replied.

I looked at Richards with wonder—at her reproachfully: he looked at Clara.

"Well, well!" said Clara, "let me manage, and all will end well. Emily, I pray you, be quiet. And you two men, away with you. Leave us alone for a quarter of an hour—do you hear? The ladies would be alone!"

Saying this, she took the printed and framed "Rules and Regulations" of the boat, and held them before our eyes.

"I go willingly, but I will take my share along," I replied, putting Louise's arm within mine.

"No, no!" cried all; "Mrs. Howard must remain."

"She goes with me—won't you, dear Louise?"

Louise considered a moment, and then

stamping her neat little foot, said laughing:

"I won't!"

"Excellent!" cried the ladies, laughing. Emily alone remained austere. She seemed not to see, or to hear.

We returned to the gentlemen's cabin—glad for my part to have escaped these women. But such they are, these Yankee girls; the best mothers, the most faithful wives, but cold as the icy hills of the banks of Newfoundland. It is easier to draw a tear from a dolphin, than from one of these northern female republicans.

At the bar we found Doughby, who had meanwhile changed his dress. Upon the whole, he was not an ill looking fellow. The light-blue gingham frock, with snow-white inexpressibles, became him well. An elegant straw hat, fine linen, and a diamond brooch, which cost at least a thousand dollars, gave him a genteel appearance, although I hate such things as diamond pins, buttons, and rings. They are only fit for dandies, clerks, and women. When Doughby had taken his glass of toddy, he exclaimed:

"How is it? what does she say, or do? Has she seen me? how did she look? pleased or angry? How did she take my aerial voyage? Did she laugh or cry?"

"Be quiet—quiet!" said Richards. "Keep quiet, my dear Doughby. The thermometer stands below zero!"

"Then it's nothing—absolutely nothing! She sticks to her resolution. She will know nothing of me—not even see me! And why won't she? I am the most unfortunate devil in the world!" he cried suddenly, with a whining tone. "I wish I lay three hundred feet down in the bottom of the Mississippi! I tell you, boys, I am used up—clear done for: I feel it—feel it in every limb!"

We burst into a loud laugh—and who could have refrained, at the sight of this fellow twenty-seven years old, with cheeks so red, that the morning sun which rises above Fort Adams, looks pale in comparison; he has shoulders fit for an observatory, to carry Atlas; and then his dark blue-gray eyes, a little damp from the effects of toddy, but glistening with the lurking devil within; and that man love-glass! he measures five feet thirteen; has legs that could carry an elephant, and fists that could kill a buffalo. We laughed like those possessed.

"Hold your laughing!" cried Doughby. "Steward, another glass; do you hear, you satanic nigger—where are you? Can't you hear when a gentleman calls you? Shall I tattoo your black skull?"

You laugh; but if you knew," he continued, almost crying—"if you knew how the girls have treated me! this is the seventh that has cheated me in the same way."

"The seventh!" I cried, laughing. "Doughby only seven times sacked? Pshaw! I got twenty-four sacks during my bachelorhood, and you know I am only one year older than you."

"Devil take your twenty-four sacks! Steward, that toddy is not fit for an old woman—there is too much water in it. Tell the captain to come up here, till I tell him to send you to the devil. No, I tell you, my heart is so full it almost bursts. So she won't hear of me, nothing at all? I'll tell you—come boys—but who are these here?" pointing to the Frenchmen. "Ah, *Mounshour Tonson!* how are you, *Mounshour Tonson!* *Parle vous English?*" he asked of Vergennes. "*Prenez un seat et un glas de Madeira—Nous parlerous haus amble le franch,*—you nigger, give us a bottle of Madeira, and see it's good, else you will catch it on your black skull. Give me a bottle of Irish, do you hear?—real Irish whisky, do you hear? or if you have none, Scotch will do. Put everything here, and clear out—no, stay at the bar—do you hear, you black rascal, stay at the bar!—but no, you'd better clear out, d'ye hear? clear! No, I tell ye, my heart is almost bursting. So, she will hear nothing more of me?"

Amid such lamentations, the man threw himself upon the sofa with force enough to break it down; the steward brought the Madeira and the bottle of Irish whisky, and we sat down to become the consolers of Doughby. Several minutes passed in the preparation of the toddy, which had to be the principal consoler. When that was properly mixed, and stood before him in an immense tumbler, he began with a half-crying voice:

REMINISCENCES OF THE KENTUCKIAN.

"T is true then, she will hear nothing of me! Not even see me! By Jupiter, that's cruel—too cruel, is n't it, Howard! Richards, what do you say? Tell me now, is n't it enough to make a man jump out of his skin?" and, to make his despair more manifest, he seized his glass, and at one draught emptied a third of its contents.

"I tell you, these girls do with us men just what they please—they are the same everywhere. When I think of the tricks they played me, while I lived at my father's house on the Cumberland—what will you say—would you believe it? It was a girl!

A girl—that misled me to your cursed Louisiana.”

“What! A girl?” cried Richards, in comical surprise.

“Hold on, Doughby! if you call our Louisiana a cursed Louisiana again, you’ll have me to contend with—” interrupted I, in the same tone.

“I call Louisiana a cursed Louisiana?” replied he; “I should like to see the man that will abuse Louisiana. I’d set his blinkers so to the right, he’d forget to look round again in a hurry. It would be fun to me to see anybody abuse Louisiana! I tell you, boys—it would be real fun to me! Abuse Louisiana! Let him come on! Why a mere look at Louisiana is delightful, and electrifies a man, from top to toe! Abuse Louisiana! Why, who dares do it? I’d smash him like a striped snake, and snap his skull off afterward! I tell you—and mind, it’s Doughby that tells it—go as far as your soles will carry you; go to where the sun rises, and farther yet, you’ll find no other Louisiana, I tell you; confound him that don’t believe it—hurrah for Louisiana!”

We hobnobbed.

“But yet, for all this, I tell you, I should not have been in our dear cursed Louisiana, where there are more centipedes, and scorpions, and snakes, and alligators, and reptiles of every sort, not to mention the musketoes—than we Kentucky folks care for. I say I would never have been in Louisiana, but for Peggy. I could write a whole book on the matter, I vow I could.”

“I should be pleased to read it, Doughby.”

“Laugh as you please—I’m no blue-stocking, to brood over *larning*; never had time for that. At seventeen years of age I was in the wars with old Hickory—against the red-skins, and there were more balls than letters, I tell you. He is my man! old Hickory is. We must get him into the white-house—if twenty Harrys, and thirty Johns, combine against him. There’s another hero than your ebony and topaz man, I tell you! Some one besides your old ‘highways and byways’ man! Alas! Polly!” he exclaimed in a lachrymose tone—seizing the glass, and emptying it on the instant—“Alas! Polly! had you not played me that trick!”

“What Polly? or which Polly?” demanded Richards.

“What Polly?” echoed Doughby, with a start. “What’s that to you? What’s Polly to you? It don’t concern you—she’s nothing to you. I know her, and that’s enough—don’t want a third man, thank’e.”

Ah! Polly! Polly! that last trick was a malicious one! I was hunting a bear that had already devoured three of my finest hogs, and which would surely have cleared my whole sty, if I hadn’t have peppered him fourteen days afterward. Queer fellows, them bears, I tell you; when they once get a taste of a porker, they won’t eat anything else.

“We had just sat down to our suppers: my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and myself, when old Cogi ran into the room, and cried: ‘Massa Ralph! Massa Ralph! the bear!’ ‘The bear!’ exclaimed I, and dropping the cup of hot tea from my hand into my mother’s lap, who screeched as though she were going into convulsions, I jumped over the benches, snatched up my rifle, and scampered off as fast as my legs would carry me.

“Master bruin had just leaped the fence, but without a hog—for that lazy block-head, Cogi, had scared him with his cries. There he was in a corn-field, to the right of which was a barn. He mounted the rails at the extremity of the field, looked soberly at the barn, and then cut stick as he saw me come up. I never could have believed, in all my life, that a bear could jump as he did—I after him so furious and mad, I could neither hear nor see. Well, in this way I ran on, up and down, for nearly an hour in the woods. I could see the tracks of the rascal, but had forgotten the dogs, which would have caught him, or drove him up a tree. In fact, I was right after him—but lost sight of him entirely in the midst of a thicket, and found myself a good five miles from home, and as dry as a cedar in August. I could scarcely breathe. Well, as I told you, I had forgotten the dogs, and stood scratching my ears and thinking how James and John would laugh at me. All at once I heard a rustling noise among the bushes—I made a jump toward it—I put the rifle to my head—but, ye bears and mice! who was it? what was it? what did I see? It was Polly! the lovely Polly! ‘Why, Polly!’ cried I, ‘is it you?’ And you may believe me, I at once forgot bears, thirst, and hunger—no, not hunger—I won’t say that, for I had laid in a stock of bread and ham—but I forgot my thirst, which just before was raging. Oh! how sweet she looked! ‘Polly,’ says I—putting down my rifle—‘Polly,’ says I, coming nearer to her—she was just fifteen—I sixteen—fresh and rosy. ‘Polly,’ says I, ‘how do you come this way?’ And she looked so roguish, pulling her neck-ribbon—I playing with my rifle, and her cheeks very red all the while.

And 'Polly,' says I, 'where do you come from, and what chance brings us together?' and all this time, my heart beating, and jumping within me, like the piston of a steam engine; and there was a kind of crawling in it—like two millions of land crabs about you, and a kind o' fluttering and swimming came before my eyes: By-and-by, I found courage to come right up to her—and then again my courage was clear gone. At last, I put my hat on my left ear, compressed my lips, and shut my eyes——"

"What do you say? Shut your eyes?"

"Shut my eyes!" responded Doughby, naively. "Yes, Howard—I shut my eyes." And by way of illustrating the effect, he actually shut his eyes; but nevertheless found the whisky-bottle, from which he filled his tumbler half-full—then adding the necessary quantity of sugar and water—"I shut my eyes, boys," he repeated, and raised the tumbler to his lips.

We laughed till every bone in our bodies ached. He continued:

"I shut my eyes, and approached nearer—And what brings you to Cumberland Bend?" said I—for you must know we were not a hundred yards from the bend—and by this time I was as much in love as a turtle-dove. 'Our horses and cows have all run away—and the negroes are all in the fields. We have not a drop of milk in the house, and are afraid the cows may dry up; so I couldn't help running after them; and—Keep off, Ralph—keep off twenty yards, I tell you!' I had got pretty close up to her, and she looked as wild as a wounded cat——"

Doughby stopped, and again raised the toddy to his lips. After a pause, he continued:

"Yes—she looked well enough, to make a fellow eat her up. I tell you, by this time I was mortally in love with the charming Polly. You have no idea how much people talk of being mortally in love—but a fellow must have felt it really, to know anything about it. No mortal man was ever plagued by women as I have been. I was as ravenously in love with her as a bear is with wild honey; and if she had only said the word, I'd have run up the prairies of Santa Fé to help her look for her horses—and caught enough to mount a troop of volunteers. My heart beat like the wings of a wild chicken in March; and whenever I tried to talk, the words stuck on my tongue; and I felt as though I must strangle, or be rid of them. So, with a desperate effort, I opens my

mouth—and says I, 'Polly,' says I, 'I must have you, or I must dry up, as our spring behind the barn dried up last week.' 'Has your spring dried up?' says she; 'ours has dried up, too; and we have to take up our water at the Cumberland; but you can get plenty at our sawmill, for Ben has fixed a wheel there;' and then she laughed in my face, and told me I was only sixteen. I told her she was not thirty yet for all her sparks. And then again she laughed roguishly, and said I must be a good boy, and help her to look for the horses and cows, and she would see. After this we went on our way—but lost it again; and no wonder, for to look after strayed horses, with a girl of fifteen, is an intricate kind o' business, I tell you. And when the moon's once up, and the sun's down, you'll lose the road, if you know it ever so well. I looked for it in every direction; but where I looked, I was sure not to find it; and in them kind o' cases it is a rule not to follow the direction of the road, but to take just the opposite."

Doughby said this with all possible sobriety.

"At last we heard a horn: we were just then in Mark's walnut flats, where the walking had become still more difficult—for the nuts were heaped up as paving stones are on our turnpikes in old Kentucky. We heard the horn, and answered to it—and who should come, but her brother Ben, with a couple of negroes. They, too, were looking for the horses. He was a surly, rude fellow, Ben was, and liked by nobody. He did not say much; kind o' moody and calculating, like a Yankee—nothing of the gay manner of the Kentuckian. He stared, I tell you—with his eyes wide open—to see me alongside his sister Polly. 'Ralph!' cries he, surprised, 'how did you come with our sister, boy? You should be on your mattress, with the blanket over your ears. The bats fly, and the owls play their tricks—they might catch you by the collar;' and he laughed in my face scornfully, 'Ben,' says I, 'you needn't stare like an ox at a butcher's axe: by jingo, you needn't take care the owls don't bite off your ears. I can take care of my own, against owls like you, though there be twenty of them.' 'Ralph, my boy,' says he, 'don't get waspish; but listen to what I say. If I ever find you again with our Polly, I'll tan your buckskin breeches for you!' 'Peace! Silence!' cried Polly; 'Peace, boys! Why are you talking there, of leathering?' 'Silence,' says I. Says Polly to me, 'And you, Ben, you ought to be more

reasonable, you are three years older; and you Ralph too; and Marco and Cyro come and stand here, and help me to keep those two asunder.' But we were up at this time, like two peacocks fighting for a hen. 'You need not make such noise, I say, when I am running after a bear,' says I. 'You, Ralph, after a bear? or the bear after you?' laughed Ben, and looked just like a bear. 'Order! peace!' cried Polly.

'Keep your tongue!' cried Ben. 'I know how to keep order as well as you; but I don't know that it's out of order to fight that fellow there. Who shall prevent me if I choose to do it, now? We are in a free country.' 'Leave your staring Ben,' says I, 'and none of your blarney, or I'll pickle your eyes, so that you shall forget staring for eight weeks. I am no Yankee, who would be frightened by you. You may come whenever you want, or inform me where I can meet you—do n't ask any favor—only a free field. I'll fight you, as sure as my name is Ralph Doughby.'

"Polly jumped between us, and parted us, or I would have fought him on the spot; but she coaxed, and grumbled, and scratched. I went off for this time; but on the third day, the man was licked so, that he forgot getting up for eight days, and Polly was so angry, that eight weeks after, just on her birth-day, she went with Jenkin Dubs, of Cumberland, to the squire. There, you've got my first love in old Kentucky; now I think you would like to hear the last one too."

After a pause, employed in taking several drinks, to strengthen the stomach, Doughby continued:

"I had returned from the Seminole war; I was just eighteen years, when I became acquainted with Peggy. She was a sweet lovely creature, as tender as fresh butter, and as sweet as fresh white honey; I sneaked around her house daily. It was just after the first Seminole war, and immediately before the corn harvest. I spoke to her about the Indian wars, and how we were encamped; and she listened to me attentively: I took courage, and in a fortnight, I tell you, I was in love like an old cat. I was, as I told you, just past eighteen, and she was sixteen. By jingo! for her I would have stormed a whole wigwam full of Seminole Indians; I would. So passed several months, and I thought I came nearer and nearer to my aim, and I was sneaking about Peggy's house, like the wolf around the herd of sheep, or the night-watch around the fire, on every day that Heaven gave us. But she said neither yes nor no. One evening she spoke to

me—'Ralph,' says she, 'you look really too wild.' 'What?' says I, 'Peggy, I too wild? Now, you ought to have seen old Hickory: that's the man, for being wild.' 'Ralph,' says she, 'you are too wild and rough, like a bear; and you drink too much whisky.' 'Monongahela, Peggy,' says I, 'real Monongahela; and why should not I drink it, if God lets it grow? Peggy, best Monongahela,' says I, 'honestly paid. I don't owe a cent; and am not in debt at all. I have got six niggers, such smart niggers, as you can find through old Kentucky; and a thousand dollars cash, left by my father, and something over it;—just give me your hand, and we'll be one.' 'Ralph,' says she, 'you are too wild, and you drink too much—I'll see in a week, I'll see, and then you may call again in a week, but not before.' I had to promise it, and was as uneasy for a week as if I had had Spanish pepper and blisters on my extremities; and I waited and longed, and when the week was over, I went to Peggy's house, and whom did I behold? Asa Dumbling sitting by the fire, with Peggy in his arms, and laughing at me, and Peggy laughed too. I was thinking about presenting him with a thrashing. This I could not get out of my head for some time; but my brother said, 'Ralph, leave that, it's foolish; if the girl should want you, she would not have permitted Asa to spark with her: she only fools with you.' I thought it over, and found that Joe was right; and Joe said to me, 'Ralph,' says he, 'you would be better off, if you would take your niggers and make a flatboat with them; we have got a few hundred barrels of flour, and corn, and ham, and cider and apples; they say these articles fetch good prices in Louisiana.' 'Hallo, Joe!' says I; 'hallo, dear brother, that's a capital idea. The Cumberland rises; we'll on to it; I don't like old Kentucky any more; I'll go down the Mississippi, and see what folks do down in Louisiana.' Said and done. I had boards enough, and beams too. We set to work; in three weeks my flatboat was ready, as fine a one as there was ever afloat on the Cumberland, the Ohio or Mississippi. It was a good strong boat. We loaded it with two hundred barrels of flour, some hundred hams, corn, cider, and everything possible; a pair of horses I took on commission for neighbor Snapper; and I took a dozen of good strong boys, and so we floated down the Cumberland, into the Ohio, and so on to the muddy Mississippi, down some thousand miles. And on the way down, I thought, excellent foliage,

fine bottoms, beautiful land, but too much water for you, Doughby, you like dry land. But when I arrived above Natchez at the Walnut Hills; and saw again something like mountains, my heart began to beat louder; but it beat louder still when I arrived in Natchez, where I sold a hundred barrels, and as many hams. I liked the country; but not so good as near Woodville, where I sold the whole cargo and the boat in the bargain. I looked around in the vicinity, and found just a track of land, which suited me; two thousand acres, five dollars an acre—best streambottom—five years term. Hallo, I thought, Ralph, that you must take. Every year two thousand dollars; the devil must be in the play, if you don't get that out. And I took it and paid immediately a thousand dollars on it, and returned in the Louisville steamer to the Cumberland; and on arriving home, I took my niggers, and we built a second flatboat as quick as we could, and I loaded on it all I got, and took as much flour as I could get, and hams and corn, and a dozen horses, which I afterward sold at a fair price; and went down to Woodville, where I began to build, and to dig, and to work, so that I forgot the Pollys and Peg-gys altogether. And now I am here and sit here firm."

And the man sat really there, and sat firm—as firm as any on the Mississippi, and the eight years of his working and doing were to his great honor. His six negroes had increased to forty; his wilderness had become a respectable plantation; his buildings were in the best order; his cotton was in demand; his acres free from debt. He had already deposited large sums in the Planter's bank, and raised, already, his hundred and fifty bales of prime cotton.

"Here I am now," he continued, with a distressed voice; "and all goes good, except my dealings with the girl, upon my soul! She was the first love I had in Louisiana, and I am sacked again. It looks just as if I was destined to get sackings in abundance—but no wife as long as I live!"

"Doughby, you are a great coward!" I rejoined. This distressed voice was really too funny, in such a frame. "How! a man like you, healthy, smart, with a hundred thousand dollars at the least—you are afraid of not getting a wife? For shame!"

"I tell you, Mr. Howard, some devilish trick comes between it. The one hates drinking; the other fighting!"

"Certainly no very amiable qualities, to tell the truth. So Miss Warren gave

you a sacking for your drinking, too. Now, I should like to advise you to drink a little less."

"Drink less!" roared Doughby. "And who drinks too much? I don't drink a drop too much! And whoever says that I drink too much, may die thirsty, by Jove! I understand drinking, I tell you, Mr. Howard. Drinking and drinking is two different things; all is called drinking, but drinking as is right and ought to be, is not found out by every one. But I understand it. I could be made doctor in a drinking company."

"We believe that!"

"Look here, boys!" continued Doughby, in a confidential voice; "remark now. You should never drink the second glass, before you are convinced that the first is properly stored in your hold, so that the load which you intend to send after, neither rolls nor totters, but finds immediately the real point of balance; therefore, it is the best to sip first the rum, instead of pouring it down by full glasses, as into a steam kettle. Before I sit down to a regular drinking, I always take care to have, not only my hold, but also my rigging in good order, and if either one of these is not right I immediately bolt it up. The same I do, if I have to open one button in the first hour, what I have to do now."

He opened one button of his vest.

"Then it is time to close the pleasure. It is likewise not good to laugh too much at the beginning of drinking. I assure you it is not good; it shakes the load in your hold, and your sails become slack, and hang down like old women's cheeks, and you do not know any longer what you drink. But if you stow the rum in order—in successive layers—then it gets its regular foundation, and does not roll in your hold, and does not cause irregular streamings, nor does it overflow; and it is then in fact and truth, a very comfortable sort of drinking."

Doughby nodded in confirmation, and pushed the glass and bottle really aside, after having spoken these words in a fatherly tone and the utmost earnest.

We were roaring with laughter.

"I do not know what you've got to laugh at," remarked Doughby. "But I tell you these Northerners are as cold as ice, like frozen apples in January; they even have no idea of a good glass of rum. But it is no wonder; one half of the year they are burned in snow, and the other half year they cool themselves with their sea-bathing and mackerel: and that's what makes them look so lean."

"But Miss Warren is not very lean, it seems," I remarked.

"I'd like to see him who says that," interrupted Doughby, furiously. "I would fix his eyes so that he would see better afterward. Oh! Emily! you lovely, sweet, charming Emily—you cruel Emily!"

And after these tender expressions, he lifted both feet upon the table, and stretched them across it, to the terror and wonder of the Frenchman, and amid our loud laughter.

"But only tell me, what was the matter? You must have been pretty rough against her, as she don't want to see or hear anything of you. I thought you were long ago husband and wife, and the whole matter settled. I was petrified, when I heard that the affair had fallen through. She had already accepted presents from you."

Doughby pushed, with one foot, the Madeira bottle further down the table, and with the other on the sugar-box and glasses, looked for some moments to the ceiling; then throwing his eyes around the whole saloon, took down first one of his feet from the table, then the other; sighed, and commenced again, but not with the distressed voice—on the contrary, his appearance had something dark in it, and the gnashing of his teeth showed clearly that the time to play with the bear was over.

CHAPTER V.

THE RACE.

"I'LL speak, I'll tell you all—tell you truly how it happened—it is the first time that I have opened my mouth about it. But it must come out; you shall hear, and decide, and judge between me and her. In short, you shall hear—yes, that you shall, by Jove!"

"Know ye then, it was June, just eight weeks and three days ago. It was on a Friday that we left. I hate Fridays. No seaman, or sportsman, likes them; they are doomed days! Every misfortune happens on a Friday. I thought so already, when we went on board the Helen Mac Gregor; but I did not say anything; I do n't think much of superstition. But Miss Warren made a strange face already; and yet I was so glad, as we left the plantation of Mrs. Houston, who, it may be said among us, had her part—but we will be quiet. The stiff old gentleman, Mr. Warren, was likewise very cheerful, for to me the whole heaven seemed full of fiddles. I followed the young lady every step, so that I tore

something with my foot—the lacing of her petticoat, I believe."

"That was wrong, Doughby."

"Pshaw! that's nothing! nothing. I told her she should not be sorry for it—I would buy a whole store full of such stuff for her as soon as we should arrive in New-York, or in Cincinnati, or Louisville, wherever she wished—she did not say anything about it; but when I tore the third lacing, she remarked, if this should continue so, she should not have a single dress on our arrival in Louisville. 'Whole or torn,' says I, 'you are always a most lovely creature, and so amiable that I could eat you up.' That was as handsome a compliment as you ever heard given in old Kentuck; but she seemed not to have heard it. On the third day, we had just arrived at St. Helena, when the old Warren spoke to me. 'Mr. Doughby,' he said, very secretly—excuse me, dear Mr. Doughby; but do n't you think you take too much brandy, and by doing so, injure your health and set a bad example to your fellow citizens? which, in a respectable man as you are, is certainly to be lamented."

"Bad example?" says I; "to be lamented, Mr. Warren—drink too much?" says I; "I take too much liquor? I am not of that opinion, Mr. Warren, and if you are of it, then you are wrong. When you see more of me, you'll see what an old Kentuckian can suck in, without sinking; no duck can do it better," says I. I meant to show the old Yankee what kind of a man he had before him, that I was no thinlegged, ash-colored Yankee; no hypocrite, who goes to church the whole Sunday, and sits with his head hanging down, thinking and speculating, in what manner he could scratch out the eyes of the warm-blooded Westerners and Southerners. 'You will see,' said I; but he shook his head—and I—let him go, looked after him, and shook my head too. Bah! I heard afterward, that he is president of one of those devilish temperance societies. Temperance societies! what is the rum good for, if not for drinking?"

Doughby became excited.

"I tell you, this Mr. Warren is a wonderful old boy; stiff and inflexible, like an icicle under a strong pouring gutter. In the morning, as soon as he got up, he came to the door of the ladies' cabin in his brocade morning gown, and Miss Warren had to come out and sit down to him, and he began to read the morning prayer of the Episcopal church, and she had to respond; and so it went on for a good hour. They wanted me to join in; but, thinks I, 'That won't do. You'd better pay morning de-

votions at the bar—I hate these morning fogs on the Mississippi, with a dry throat. Could n't think of such a thing.' The whole livelong day, he went around as stiff as a chief justice of a district court. At noon, he said the prayers at the table; and I assure you, it always took a good quarter of an hour before he said, Amen. The soup often became cold, and the other dishes were taken away before our noses. The rest of the company had finished, and were already at the bar again, and he was still praying. I often got almost crazy."

"The praying would not have been so bad, if it had not been too long," we said, laughing.

"Pshaw! I hate to see a person wanting to outshine his fellow-citizens. There is much pride, or, to speak openly, there's a great deal of arrogance in it. If a man wants to pray, let him do it, and I do it too; and if the company wants it, let one be found to read the prayer. I tell you, I always find assumption behind this piety. The old Yankee thought that we were heathens, and he wished to enlighten us. Pshaw! I hate such things."

"His reasoning is not so bad," remarked Richards.

"I soon saw, that I was sitting on the larboard side with the old one. He became still more quiet and brief. This I would n't have cared much for; but the captain told me confidentially, that the ladies wished him to tell me not to increase my visits to the saloon, and especially in the morning, when many of them had not completed their toilets; I should always first ask permission and get announced, as prescribed in the ship's order. 'What! I get announced, when I want to see my bride?' says I. 'What do I care for the other ladies? They may be dressed or not—I don't care. I only want to go to my doll. I have got nothing to do with the others—only with Miss Warren.' 'It was Miss Warren,' said the captain, 'who stood by when the ladies gave me this order; and she begged me particularly to see that the regular order was preserved—which Mr. Warren, too, impressed on me particularly.' 'Miss Warren?' says I. 'Captain, that's a lie! she didn't say that.' 'Mr. Doughby,' said he, 'I don't lie; and if anybody else should tell me that, I'd knock him down like a mad dog; and therefore, I must ask you to take back your words, and to convince yourself.' And I ran as if I was crazy, and asked Miss Warren and Mr. Warren: both dryly told me the same. I thought I should die at once. I became as furious as a wounded

panther, and perhaps I drank more than I ought to have done. But what else can be done on a voyage up the Mississippi? I tell you, as well as I like him, our old father Mississippi is a most filthy water. For days, weeks, nothing but travelling. Clap, clap, clap—trap, trap, trap, goes like the wind. Steamboats and forests fly past you; but you don't see anything but a terrible mass of dirty, muddy water, and woods and water again—day and night, water and woods. One gets tired of this eternal water and wood. You go down and look how they fix the fire, and throw whole loads of wood into the stove, until it boils, and roars, and foams, and hisses; but you get tired of standing among those black devils. You return again to the bar, and drink more than you ought to. Everybody is not such an old, tough-skinned Yankee as Mr. Warren, who does not like drinking.

"It was just three o'clock in the afternoon, of the seventh day of our voyage, when we left Wolf's island behind us; which, as you well know, is above New Madrid, and below the mouth of the Ohio river. The poor Helen MacGregor has blown up since, as you know, just at New Madrid, and took half-a-hundred passengers into the other world. And so we arrived at Wolf's island, where we caught the Ploughboy, the Huntress, the Louisville and two other steamers. It was a nice little fleet. We were just sitting behind the ladies' cabin, with Miss Warren and the old gentleman, both very moody, when the word was given, that the George Washington had come up. It is a glorious steamer, this George. It shines and glimmers already in the distance, like a floating palace, and flies upon you as soft and as swift as a duck! It is a real joy to see such a gigantic structure come up to you. I was still sitting by Miss Warren, but I was sitting as if on coals. How does it come, that we men have such a mighty respect for petticoats? At once I hear that the George Washington beats us. I jump up, run to the upper deck, and true, there it comes in all its pride and glory—trrarara! trrarara! and roaring and foaming and spouting fire, like the Emperor Nap at the head of his guards and horsemen and guns. This George presented a magnificent view, in the midst of the five steamers, the Louisville, Huntress, and the others: it had caught them already. We stood and looked—all who were on the Helen MacGregor, and I tell you, our hearts beat stronger and stronger; you could see anxiety on all faces. The bell rang for dinner, not a foot moved: 'Cap-

tain,' I cried, 'we cannot let the George go ahead of us, we can't stay behind with honor,' says I. 'We must show that we are Mississippi men,' 'Mr. Doughby,' says he, 'it is the George Washington,' says he, 'two hundred horse power,' says he. 'It is all gammon,' says I, 'it has no two hundred and twenty horse power,' says I. 'You only say so, to escape the race. And if the old George had three hundred horse power, I would shorten my stirrup, and spur my horse.'

"And the captain became warm, when I said so—I could see it; his eyes were fixed on the hostile boat, which had left already the five others, and came up to us now, as if we were nothing but buckskinned, dry Britons, and they, free, fresh Americans, who don't care a farthing about the world. And as the captain looked over at the George, he became red, blue and green—changed color like a dolphin—his teeth gnashing, and he bit his lips, so that the blood was running down his chin. And the Washington roared nearer, and the smoke hissed stronger, and hurrahs after hurrahs came over to our ears. 'Captain,' I cried, 'the Washington beats us, the honor of the Helen MacGregor is gone.' The captain stood as if covered with a coat of plaster, the sweat on his brow, and his eyes bloodshot. He had beat the five steamers, which roared their hurrahs for Washington, after him, and which were right glad already to see the Helen MacGregor humbled.

"'Captain!' I cried once more, 'will you permit yourself to be beat out of the field, without even showing him the white of your eye? The Helen MacGregor is a new boat. Fire up!' Now he ran down, and cried, 'Fire up, boys! fire up! high pressure!' 'Put it to her, boys!' I cried. 'Fire up!' And the boys fired, and fired, so that the sweat poured down from them like spouts; and they poked in the wood with their large tongs, and it began to hiss from our chimneys—it was a real pleasure. We went right into the Ohio—the Washington was nearly at our side. Then came old Warren and Emily to the deck, and cried, 'Mr. Doughby, for Heaven's sake! Mr. Doughby! Captain, for our sake! Mr. Doughby! Captain!' And so they cried, 'Mr. Doughby! I entreat you! Will you have the steamboat, and your fellow-citizens, blown up? Will you race with the George Washington? 'For mercy's sake, Mr. Doughby!' cries the young lady. 'Mr. Doughby!' cries the old gentleman, 'I entreat you to use all your influence with the captain, to induce him

to give up this race.' 'Pshaw!' says I, 'it is nothing; we don't want to run a race with the Washington. We only want to see which boat goes quickest.' 'That must not be, I protest! The safety of our fellow-citizens—our own—if the boiler bursts!' 'Pshaw! safety of our fellow-citizens,' says I. 'Our fellow-citizens are safe. We don't want any race, Mr. Warren!' says I; 'we only want to try, for some moments, which boat is swiftest.' 'Mr. Doughby!' cries Emily, almost beside herself, and throws herself into my arms, and drags me down to the engine, and hangs on me, and prays and entreats: 'Mr. Doughby, if you love me, respect me I mean to say, in the least, use your influence to prevent it.' Then she tore herself from me, and ran up to the captain, who was standing by the side of the engineer. The Washington was close behind us.

"We, as I said before, were just entering the Ohio. Now, you know that the stream of the Mississippi, as it comes down straight, presses the Ohio back for some miles toward Trinity. A finer water basin for a desperate race, you cannot find in the whole world. The two streams have just the right breadth, for about four or five miles, in that water-circle, which is bounded by the banks of the Illinois, old Kentucky, and her daughter Missouri. The stream is just in your favor when you enter the Ohio, because that river is pushed back by the Mississippi. We were nearer the Illinois side, and thereby had one advantage over our adversary, who held himself on the Kentucky side, and came nearer to us, roaring terribly, and followed by the other five steamers, who had likewise put on their spurs. Our Helen MacGregor was still in advance. The devil would not have continued the race. The air trembled with heat, smoke, roaring and foaming. The enemy was now right at our back. The figure-head of the George was parallel with our stern. 'Helen MacGregor hold yourself stiff,' cried I. 'Fire up, boys!' I said. 'Ten dollars, if you do the business! 'Hurrah!' cried the hundred passengers—'Hurrah!' The Washington loses—falls back. The captain looked, but he could not speak a word. His lips were pressed, as if they were nailed together—he stood like a statue. We made twenty knots. We had to keep up now, or fall among the Huntress and the Ploughboy. All the planks cracked; the engine shook, and the smoke roared. 'The Helen MacGregor,' I cried, 'is a brave woman—a brave Scottish lass. She

has fire in her body.' And that was true. She was as swift as a race-horse, to which, for the first time, the spurs are given. She floated no more—she flew like a bird, or a wild panther, or a wounded stag; she was as swift as the rising storm. The waters of the milkwhite Ohio flew past us, as if they shot out of Fulton's steam rockets; still wilder became her course; the Kentucky shores to the right, with their cotton trees, flew past us; the forests flew by, as if seized by a panic; the Illinois shores with their magnificent trees danced past us, like wild witches riding on their broomsticks. Behind us disappeared the high banks of the Missouri, with the forest in the back, and the plantation of old Kentucky in the foreground. She appeared smaller every second, and in a minute it was only as large as a pigeon-house. All swam before and behind us—all hurried, drove, flew and roared. We had lost completely sight and hearing. Hurrahs by thousands, seven steamers, groaning, moaning, hissing, spouting fire; all disappeared before my eyes and senses.

"The forest below Trinity flew toward us; on it came, the wheels cracked and the people howled before us and behind us. Hurrah! Hurrah! It was a gallopade, a gigantic struggle—Trinity was the goal before us, and both of us almost conquerors. At once the captain cries, 'She is before;' and then he stares right out, and holds himself on the railing, and bites his lips, which were covered with blood. 'Captain,' says I, 'she is not before.' 'Look, Mr. Doughby,' says he, 'look!' I looked, and as I was spying all became dim before my eyes. This George Washington raced like the devil. I was now convinced that she would have caught us in two minutes; and it did not take even two minutes.

"'Upon my soul she is ahead,' I cried. 'She is ahead,' repeated the captain with a low voice: he was deadly pale. I could not speak a word—and he, sure as I live, he had to support himself at the railing, or he would have fallen. There was no hope; his figure-head was parallel with our stern now; ten seconds afterward, a third of his length was alongside of us; ten seconds later, two, and in less than a minute he flies proudly before us, and thunders his hurrah into our ears, and the five steamers behind us join into it, and we did n't hear anything but hurrahs and hurrahs. Ah, I would have given a thousand dollars if we had reached Trinity two minutes before. Suddenly we heard the cry from below, 'The boiler bursts! the boiler bursts!' and immediately a rattling, and then a hiss-

ing and a roaring. 'Happy voyage into eternity!' all cried, and I thought, now comes the hot bath. But it was nothing; the cry originated with a pair of niggers, who were called by Emily and Mr. Warren, and the other females in the ladies' cabin. Both had been down to the engineer; had begged him, conjured him; and all the women had made the man's head so hot, that he consented, and opened the ventile—and we were only within half a mile of Trinity. I believe, surely, that if the cowardly villain had not done it, we would have kept equal course with the Washington, for she did not arrive two minutes before us. I fell upon him, I was so mad, and if the captain and some good friends had not interfered, I would have thrashed him on the spot; and had it cost me a thousand dollars, he deserved it, the disgraceful rascal. We had arrived in Trinity, and had made the five miles in less than twelve minutes; but Miss Warren was so angry, and the old gentleman as mad and stiff as a pair of fire-tongs. But I could n't help it—honor goes above all."

"But you are too daring, indeed," remarked Richards.

"Daring?" replied Doughby, unsatisfied. "Daring, when the honor of a ship is in the game?"

"Pshaw! the honor of a steamboat!"

"'Pshaw,' you say, Richards! Now, if I did not know that you were a true old Virginian, upon my soul! I should almost believe that you were one of those soft-soap Creoles. 'Pshaw!' you say, 'the honor of a steamboat!' A steamboat, I tell you, is a ship too, and a large one too, and an American—true American! It is our ship; we have discovered it. The old world might have stood long, and would not have found it out. We got it, boys, says I. 'Pshaw!' you say, he continued, excited. "And if Perry had said 'pschaw,' on Lake Erie, or Macdonough, on Champlain, or Rogers, or Porter! You can say pschaw at everything, at the honor of a steamer—a ship—a state. I tell you, he who says pschaw when his ship is sailed over, will also say pschaw when it is taken; and he who does not get warm when he sees another vessel sailing proudly past his own, is a coward. I tell you, this pride is ambition, and this ambition is the true thing."

"But the lives of so many human beings—"

"I tell you, of the hundred-and-twenty passengers we had on board the Helen, there were not three, Mr. Warren and

the ladies excepted, who would have cared a straw about it, if they should have had a barrel of hot water over them, provided they had arrived two minutes earlier in Trinity."

We had to laugh at the Kentucky *brute*, and acknowledged the truth of his assertions. Cold-blooded and passionless as Uncle Sam generally is on points like this, he often changes his nature, and in the desire to see his ship first in harbor, he forgets, what he very seldom does, wife, child, property and fortune—his own life, even, does not come into account. He is a maniac, who puts all on a single throw. And the five hundred or thousand lives which these daring races cost him yearly, seem only to increase his fever heat.

"I tell you," rejoined Doughby again, "if Miss Warren had given me the sack- ing for the race, I'd have taken it without losing a word; but in the manner that it happened——"

Doughby's face became suddenly dark.

"Yes, it is vexatious, when it stares right into your face, that you have been an unfeeling blockhead. No gentleman should forget what a gentleman owes to a lady."

The man felt, and felt deeply, it was evident.

"Doughby, this feeling shows that you are a gentleman. He who feels so deeply an injury offered to a lady, as you do, is a gentleman; and whoever denies it has to do with me!"

I had spoken these words without smiling. Doughby threw a doubtful look at me, and then said:

"Thank you, Howard! I know that you've got your heart in the right place, although you are a federalist, or, as people say, an aristocrat. But what do I care about the blood? I tell you, that if I hear anybody calling you an aristocrat again, I'll take him by the hair, and knock his head against a cedar fence, until he recants, and says that you are just the man that a true democrat must and ought to be!"

"No, better leave that, dear Doughby," I said laughing. "We'll let people say what they please—we live in a free country, Doughby."

Doughby looked somewhat astonished at me. The man had gradually become very interesting to me, in spite of his Kentucky roughness.

"I'll tell you all, just as clear and true as I know it, and as I have experienced it—and I have experienced it, I dare say, as

hard as any other person. I should like to see him who could convict me of a lie, I would! I would!"

"Yes, where did I stop?—at Trinity. When we arrived in Trinity, I remarked very well, that to Miss Emily, my company was just as agreeable as polecats to our horses, or the whip to our niggers; but I did not say anything. Only I often heard your name from her mouth, which was not quite agreeable to me;—and, to tell the truth, if we had not have been separated by a thousand or more miles, it might have cost the life of one of us. Several times I was about returning to break your neck."

"Thank you!" rejoined I, laughing; "but for neck-breaking two are wanted, as you know, one who breaks, and the other, who gets broken. In gouging, you know that I am a novice; it's not the fashion, either in Louisiana or Old Virginia."

"And neither in Old Kentuck! No Kentuckian, of any respectability, does it. But a good rifle!"

"Thanks again!" and I laughed louder. "I shoot with rifles, but only at bears; for other occasions, I take pistols."

"Then you would have taken pistols, and I, the rifle."

We almost roared with laughter. The man spoke all this in so cold-blooded a manner, that it was evident that this ticklish affair of honor had settled down strangely into his pericranium.

"Well, she spoke often and much of you to her father; and there was no end to your praise;—how genteel Mr. Howard was; and the old nobility of England was shining on his brow; and how noble his character—and the devil knows what—and the father always confirmed and began his song of your temperance; and that you did not chew tobacco. Is it true, Howard? You, an old Virginian, and don't chew?"

"Certainly not."

Doughby's astonishment was indescribable. He took a roll of chewing tobacco, cut off a piece as large as his thumb, and put into his right cheek.

Shaking his head he continued:

"To tell you the truth, I was dreadfully annoyed. Our company consisted of foolish Yankees, and New-York peddlers, and ladies who spoke of nothing but of good society and novels. At last we arrived in Louisville, when my patience was nearly used up. In Louisville we stopped four hours, looked at the line of the new canal,

went to dinner at the Lafayette Hotel, and shipped for Cincinnati."

Here the man stopped; threw his right foot again over the table, spouted a stream of tobacco-juice against the door of the next state-room, close to the shoulder of the young Frenchman: while a sigh, like the croak of a bull-frog, ascended from his breast. He drew his foot down from the table, and continued:

CHAPTER VI.

THE LEAP.

"You know Mr. Warren owns a few thousand acres of land, above Dayton near Yellow Springs, and we were journeying thither. On our arrival at Cincinnati, I made immediate preparations, and next morning we left;—Mr. Warren and Miss Emily in a carriage, and Mr. Blair and I on horseback. The fresh air and motion restored us a little. We drove fast, and arrived in the evening at Dayton—quite a pleasant little town, I tell you, a right pretty little place. Mr. Warren and Miss Emily stopped at lawyer T—'s; but Blair and I sought the Dayton Hotel."

"The next morning we started up the Miami to look at the lands. They are not worth much, and are covered mostly by white-oak and beech-trees, which might be better, but are good enough for Ohio. Near Germantown, afterward, I saw a bottom; a first rate sugar-bottom, I tell you, if the climate suited—a capital bottom, but German like sour-crout; none but Germans live there. After we had looked all over the thousand acres of land, and five houses that belong to Mr. Warren, we started for Yellow Springs, where we drank the water and bathed. It did us all a great deal of good—the young lady particularly looked very well, she was in the best humor too; but a halting devil was again after us. Old Warren had taken his agent, lawyer T., along, and he took his son; and that son seemed to have a great fancy for Emily. The fellow was rather too superfine, too smooth, too sleek, and he kept flirting, and sniggling, and dancing around Emily so much that he drove me almost crazy. A boy of twenty-one, a land shark of a Yankee, who liked her thousand acres of land—which I did not care a straw for; I have land enough, and wanted none of your half-Yankee, half-German, Ohio land. I got real *wolfish* about it, and being mad, I drank considerable at table; not too much, but a good deal. In the afternoon we were go-

ing to the Miami cliffs, which are four miles from the baths, and which I shall never forget. It was just three o'clock in the afternoon when we arrived. They are wonderful to look at—an immense ridge of rock, very naked rock, and nothing but rock, sparingly overgrown with crippled oak and cedars; not a trace of the stream, which you can see winding along above and below, can be discovered here. It is hidden underneath the rock saddle, or back as you may call it, and is pinched into it, swallowed up by these rocks; and you can hear it roar and thunder beneath like a thousand owls. You can see nothing of the stream, except when the sun is high; then you can see a little silver stripe, and it howls just like an old nigger wench, when you hit her shins. It runs about eighty feet beneath, is about eighty in depth and has very fine trout. When I looked down this precipice, it roared so madly, that I had to laugh aloud. I thought there was half a hundred devils frolicking below. Mr. Blair stood at my side, and the others came up at the distance, making their geological, and I know not what other sorts of observations, of how a revolution of nature must have burst these rocks, and all the time that young coxcomb spoke as knowingly, as if he carried the entire town-library from the government house at his fingers' end. Pshaw! and I doubt if he knows the difference between oats and barley. As I tell ye, I was real wolfish. Suddenly Blair said to me: 'Mr. Doughby, do you know, a few years ago, one of our fellows is said to have jumped across this abyss; but, as the story goes, very nearly lost his life. It only seems four or five feet, but it is much wider.' 'A Kentuckian jumped over?' says I; and that moment it seemed as if a dozen devils were laughing at me from below. 'A Kentuckian is said to have jumped across' says I. 'In one minute you can say, that a Kentuckian *has* jumped across, and that sound and safe.' 'I guess you won't, Mister Doughby,' says he. 'What will you bet, that I do it?—I, myself?' 'I'll bet you won't!' says he. 'Five hundred?' says I. 'I am no Mississippi planter—but—a hundred.' 'Done, for a hundred,' says I. 'Here is a hundred dollar bill.' I pulled the money from my pocket, and threw it on the ground, he did the same; we put a stone on it—I pull off my coat, measure the distance, take a run, and was just going to jump to the opposite rock across the abyss. Suddenly the Warrens, father and daughter, the lawyer from Dayton and his infernal son, hung to me like clot-burrs. 'Mr. Doughby!' cried the

old gentleman—"Mr. Doughby, is the devil really in you? What, in Heaven's name, do you think of?"

"Miss Emily stood, without uttering a word; but her bosom rose high; she trembled like an aspen leaf. 'Mr. Doughby, what would you do?' she said finally, in a serious tone. 'What would I do,' says I, 'why, I'll jump over like a real Kentuckian, that's all!' 'Do you know, that the abyss is more than seven feet wide?' cried the old lawyer. 'And if it were twenty,' I cried, 'no Kentuckian is afeared of breadth; an open field and no favor.' 'Mr. Doughby,' cried Mr. Warren, 'I beg of you?' I broke loose. They attacked me again. 'Mr. Doughby,' cried Emily, who was getting warmer and warmer—"Mr. Doughby, you must not—if you have the least love, the least respect for me, you must not!" 'What must I not?' says I, 'who says I must not? Ain't we in a free country?' 'Mr. Doughby!' prayed, begged, cried, Emily, 'on my knees, I pray you, I beg you not to do this—and not to force me to look at such a terrible sight. Have pity on me.' They all hung upon me. 'I withdraw my bet,' cried the lawyer. 'A man who withdraws his bet, is a rascal,' says I. 'Kill me, Mr. Doughby, but don't force me to witness this mad, terrible, childish, unnecessary—"What's unnecessary and childish?" says I. 'My pledged honor, is that nothing? Kentucky honor, nothing?' And all five hung at me—Miss Emily prayed, begged; Mr. Warren cried, the lawyer bawled, his son held my arm; that made me the most mad. Blair cried again he would n't bet—that made me furious; I pushed them all away, that they staggered to the ground—ran half-a-dozen steps back, jumped as if the devil drove me forward, and,—there I was between heaven and the abyss.

"Hark ye! I have been in many a scrape, where my life hung by a thread; but those two minutes, that I hung above the Miami abyss, I'll not forget the longest day I live. My right foot had slipped on the rock, and I fell like a cotton bale down the rocky wall, clinging only with one hand to life, or rather, to the rock. I only heard the cries of the men, the roaring of the waters, the shrieks of Emily, and then my senses began to fail. Instinctively, my nails clawed the rocks till the blood ran down. I wanted to lift the right hand to hold tighter, for my body became heavier every moment; but if you had given me all the Congress land in Louisiana, I would not have been able to lift it. Behind me, the ear-piercing cries of the men, beneath, the

roaring waters; I began to see blue and green before my eyes; I heard a wild noise buzzing in my ears, strange figures came before my eyes, the whole earth began to turn around—sun moon and stars danced past me. The bowels of the earth, with its many-footed monsters, stared at me. I felt that help was impossible, and all was over with me. A plank of ten feet long, would have been worth fifty thousand; but there was no house, no hut, within miles—no human being, except my companions, and they had lost their senses, all, except Emily Warren.

"Suddenly, I heard her voice, shrill, yelling and unnatural: it cut me to the heart and woke me. 'Heaven be praised!' she cried; 'take the end of this shawl, both ends!' I saw nothing, heard nothing further, for that moment the left hand failed me, my body slipped along the rock, and I was about to fall sixty or eighty feet into the roaring abyss below. In despair, I grappled with my right hand something which had just fallen beside me, at the moment when my left let go, and I was falling: it was a shawl which I had caught; now my life depended on a shawl. I held on to it with the claws of a tiger; then I took hold of it with my left hand and tried instinctively to see if it will hold—it holds. I set both knees against the rock wall and raise myself—still it holds. I rise higher, and keep rising. My right elbow has already reached the level of the rock—I stared wildly around—not six inches off, stands a little crippled oak, scarce three inches in diameter, and around this the shawl was tied. I bring my left arm upon the level, grasp the oak, it bends; I snatch for it with my right, it bends more; but I swing full, and push and draw myself upon the rock; my right knee has reached it, a last push and my left is there also—I sink like a run-down buffalo upon the rock, and as I live, could not rise again. How long I lay there, I know not, but it must have been more than a quarter of an hour. I was torn, bruised, and lacerated on my hands, feet, elbows and knees. My clothes hung in tatters about me, and beneath me was a pool of blood. The first thing, however, I did when I rose, was to see how I was saved.

"It was Emily who had saved me. The men had all lost their wits, but not she. Ah, she is a splendid girl! Soon as she saw that I was about to slip off into eternity, she pulled the handkerchiefs from the men's pockets, tied them together, and then to her Cashmere, which she had luckily taken along on account of the night air;

put a stone into the end, slings it across the yawning precipice, and luckily around the crippled oak; then quickly sends the other end with another stone after it, so that both safely drop down to me. It was the same Cashmere which I had brought her as a present, and which now hangs as a memorial over my bed. When I looked across, the gentlemen were occupied with her, as she had sunk down on the rock more dead than alive. After she had seen me safe, her senses left her and she swooned away. No one spoke, only old lawyer T. whispered across, in a scarce audible voice, that I should go a mile further down the stream, where, below the rocks, I would find a house and opportunity to cross; then he winked me, as much as to say, you had better go. I did not like to do it. I was very lame, but I forgot everything at the sight of Miss Warren. Shame and repentance tortured me, to a degree, that I scarce knew whether to be grateful for the preservation of my life or not.

"Tortured in soul and body, I went down the stream and found the house; the people brought me over the river to the opposite side. I found the old lawyer and Mr. Blair, who stopped with the carriage by the shore. We drove slowly back to Yellow Springs, where I saw nothing more of Emily. I had to go to bed, after being rubbed with spirits of wine, which burned dreadfully. I could not close an eye all night; I cried, and howled, and reared so much, that the people of the house scarce knew what to do with me; I could not rest. I returned the next day to Dayton, but found neither Mr. Warren nor his daughter, but a letter, which the landlord handed to me. Here it is."

Doughby pulled it from his note-book, and laid it before us.

We looked over it. It was the writing of Mr. Warren, written in a mild and kind, yet firm and decided tone: it had somewhat of the stiff Yankee manner.

The old gentleman had the honor to inform Mr. Doughby, at the request and with the concurrence of his daughter, that Emily had from the beginning of their engagement, doubted whether, considering their different and perhaps entirely opposite dispositions, that general harmony of thought and feeling could ever exist between them which was absolutely necessary to the formation of matrimonial happiness; but that *she*, in hopes of smoothing the somewhat rough sides of this otherwise worthy young man, had permitted his attentions, and had moreover been induced to adopt this course by the wishes of those who were dear to

her. This hope, however, had entirely disappeared; and convinced as she was, that she could never gain that influence over Mr. Doughby, which it was necessary, for her happiness, that she should possess, she would now return Mr. Doughby's word and promise requesting him to end his addresses, and accept her best wishes for his welfare. She also assured him, that after the many proofs of disrespect to her sex, and cruel injury to her feelings, that she could no longer think of forming with him any nearer connection—a determination that Mr. Warren perfectly approved; and requested Mr. Doughby to consider the relation, which had hitherto existed between *him* and Miss Warren, as terminated.

"Yes," that was the darkest day of my life, and which I can never forgive myself. I was a Turk, a heathen, an Algerine, a Tunisian, a Tripolitan, a real alligator. I tell you, it hurts—it cuts my very heart. I'd give ten thousand dollars if I could undo it! but it does not look like it—she has real Yankee stubbornness, and never forgives. She is not like one of us, who boil up like hot water and scald, but when salt is thrown on get cool again. No, she is like a slow hickory-coal fire. I can't help it! I can't tear my head off! Tell me what I am to do; I'll do it, even if it should kill me; but then she must forgive me."

"She forgives you already, so she writes—or rather her father."

"Well, then let her say so; and say, 'Here's my hand!'"

"I believe on this point also, she speaks clearly. She don't want you for a husband, and I cannot say she is wrong, after the cruel ill-treatment her womanhood has experienced from you—after her deepest and most tender feelings, were so unmercifully injured. After such neck-breaking proofs, not of daring and strength, but of obstinacy, I doubt whether any of our young ladies would find your society or a nearer connection particularly desirable."

"On my soul, Howard, I believe you are right. But, then, I am a real red-hot, burning, boiling Kentuckian. Believe me, sometimes my blood boils up and flies through my veins, it does not run. But I am not the only one. Come to old Kentucky, and you'll find thousands. Howard, don't be angry; but you will see, if I get a wife, I'll be a different man. Help me to a wife: that's the main point. Only a wife, I tell you; if I get no wife, I'll go to the devil. A woman would set all to rights. A wife, Richards, Howard," cried

Doughby. "Ay! a wife," he repeated in a lower tone.

And again he threw his feet upon the table, looked up at the ceiling of the cabin, folded his arms—and remained in this position a few minutes. Suddenly he threw his feet off the table again, cast a look around the saloon, and then out of the window.

"Hallo! are these your Red River bottoms? Let's look at them! let's go on deck! Steward! clear away this, do you hear, steward! Stay here, steward! but you, *Mounshur Tonson*, come along! come you dear little Frenchman! *Nous parlons hansomble the French.*"

Saying this, he began to sing: "Let's go to old Kentuck;" drew the arm of the young de Vergennes within his own, and pulled him along to the hurricane deck.

"He is not likely to cut his throat about a girl," I began after a while; "but how comes it, that Miss Warren has come down again with your aunt?"

I might have spared this question, but it was out. Richards paused for a moment embarrassed, then he replied:

"Aunt Houston wanted to surprise the pair at their wedding, and left eight days after the Helen MacGregor, for the north. When she did not find the Warrens and Doughby at Saratoga, she went to Boston, and took Emily again down with her."

"And what does she wish, and what do you?"

Richards paused again; then said in a careless tone, which gradually grew more firm,

"Doughby is no bad man, and by no means as rough as he appears."

"But, at any rate, too rough for an accomplished girl, like Emily; who would, within a first year, fall a victim to his want of feeling. To speak candidly, I am astonished how Aunt Houston, who is otherwise a woman of penetration, could encourage such a connection, and still more, how even you could lend yourself to such matchmaking. It is almost like forcing a strait jacket upon the girl."

"If aunt appears somewhat obstinate on this point, she has some reasons, which are certainly weighty. In the first place, Doughby is rough, but not coarse; fiery, hot, but not unfeeling. On the contrary, he has all the tender feeling of the Kentuckian, when touched in the right place. Let him have Emily for a few months as a wife, and she will tame him. At all events, he is a worthy, respectable young man. Moreover, he is far from being the bear he seems. He is boiling hot, as most

of the Kentuckians are, yet full of sound common sense and correct judgment. His domestic arrangements are regulated better than you find those of most bachelors. Let him have a good housewife, and he will become one of our first men. Besides, he is steady and sober."

"Steady and sober? Really, you discover strange virtues in this man!"

"Sober, in the western and southwestern sense of the word," continued Richards. "You certainly never have seen him drunk, though he can take a good quantity. His blacks, although they get many a knock from him, would go through fire for him: he keeps them better than most of his neighbors, and has the best negro families in the neighborhood. Not the least suspicion of connection with black, quadroon, or white beauties, rests upon him: he is much too volatile, even too proud, for that. His madness is, in reality, nothing but the exuberant spirits of an unspoiled child of nature—of a natural Kentuckian; and therefore he is just the man who, under the present political feeling of the people, might be called upon to play a part, which neither you nor I would ever succeed in doing. In short, he is a gentleman of the new school of democracy, as Jefferson founded it."

"For which, to tell the truth, we owe him but little thanks," I replied, shaking my head. "But he acted according to the spirit of his time. Even a Washington would have had to submit to it—who, perhaps, died just at the right time not to see his brilliant virtues and merits rewarded with ingratitude."

"You observe rightly," said Richards. "The spirit of that time was fresh, democratic, and the present era is like it; but it is beginning to be exhausted, and we federalists have more hopes than ever of regaining power. But we must not fold our hands, or the proper moment will pass. If political influence only remains ten years longer in the hands of these people, our power is for ever gone. New families will come into possession, and displace us. Moreover, there is a mark upon us, which makes it very difficult for one of our party to gain any influence. Only try it once."

"I care not for political influence!"

"You are wrong, and so are most of us. The people, the nation can spare us; we cannot spare them. It is the greatest folly which aristocrats can commit, to believe, that they can successfully oppose the people. Our fathers, the federalists, framed the Constitution; but look at it, how it stands. It appears like a frame house full of holes,

into which every one enters at pleasure, without regarding doors or windows; and why? because democrats have the keeping of the building. The longer it lasts, the worse it will be."

"But who wishes to drink whisky with plebeians, ploughmen, cobblers or tailors, or to lay about in groggeries?"

"Just that is our fault. Because we are too prone to mix with the people, they turn their backs to us, when offices are to be filled, which require trust and confidence. We lose ground; and our old families, who have settled the country, and fought for our independence, must make way for the sons of Irish drunkards, English beggars, and French hair-dressers, because they are less delicate."

"They will soon be forced out, and the people will discard them."

"I doubt that, for the people look at us with suspicion. They know not gratitude; besides these persons are of the people, who are so much inclined to forget the services of our ancestors in the matter-of-fact present. Meanwhile their inclinations become still more democratic, or rather mobocratic; the central government loses its authority; our Houses of Representatives, and Congress, swarm with persons without education, without position, who have crawled in by the lowest flattery. By means of whisky-feasts and stump-speeches, our offices of trust will be degraded, and will become footmen's places."

"Still the nation is well-governed, and was never more prosperous than at present. I, moreover, do not think much of systems of government designed only for the future, and useless for the present. Let the people alone—*vox populi, vox Dei*. You have still those English notions in your head. But they are not so very contemptible. Look at the aristocracy of England,—how brilliantly it stands,—upon what a pinnacle of unprecedented grandeur is the country placed! and why? Because this aristocracy has been eighty years in possession of power, and possessed the right to make laws, and protect itself, and to make barriers which the people could not overleap. We ought to be ashamed, when a Briton, of good family, comes to us, and sees this *pêle-mêle*. No, this must not be; we must try all means, and if we cannot come into possession of power ourselves, at least have friends, who will act with us, and in our interest."

"But what are you aiming at, and why did you launch forth upon this political digression?"

"Very naturally, just because Doughby

is the man, calculated to promote our interest in this respect."

"Doughby?" I asked, astonished.

"I should not be surprised, if next year he sat in Congress, and two years after in the Senate at Washington. Last week our regiment had its election for staff officers. Among the candidates for the second majorship, was Captain Wielding, of North Carolina, whom you know is a gentleman, in every sense of the word. And he possesses a large property. He took every pains to make himself popular, and thought he must succeed. The election was just about to commence, when Doughby arrived at Woodville. No sooner did they see him, than there was a general cry, 'Here's Doughby—he must be our second major—Doughby you must be major,' they cried from every side. 'Done,' cried Doughby, 'done boys; I will be your major; but let us drink first.' And all went to the hotel, where they took their drink, then to the cigar box, and threw in their tickets; and the result? Poor Wielding had scarcely ten votes. Doughby was elected, and would have been elected, had it been for governor of Louisiana; and why? because he drinks, fights, smokes, chews, and converses with planters, hunters, squatters, peddlers, and can make himself agreeable with all, and yet commands a certain respect from all."

"And then? still I do not see——"

"Only this, that if he becomes one of us, our party will have gained a great deal. His influence, particularly among the middle classes, especially the upland planters, is very considerable. We can count upon one vote in the state, for the approaching presidential election. The other is doubtful; if we have Doughby, it is almost certain."

"Give up your hopes in regard to that. Old Hickory is safe; Pennsylvania—though Philadelphia will vote for Adams—is entirely his, New-York half or two-thirds; in both states aristocracy is beaten. Virginia and the two Carolinas are for him; neither John Quincy, nor Harry, have the least chance. Moreover, Doughby is entirely for 'Old Hickory.'"

"Let Emily and the women look out for that. Emily is a reasonable girl, who can be talked to, after the first bitterness of disappointed hopes has passed, for she is not insensible to temporal advantages, and Doughby is a handsome fellow; if she has him she will be able to manage him. Even lions are tamed in this manner. As to Old Hickory, it is not of so much importance to prevent his election, as to get a majority

in the House, and particularly in the Senate. With the assistance of the Bank, we shall harass and pinch him from every side, until the nation must finally be convinced that salvation is only to be gained at the hands of federalism. Do you see now why aunt brought Emily down with her?"

"I see," was my reply.

"We must keep them all together; because we have federalists, who, like you, are too proud; we must, like the English Tories, be satisfied with people who are less delicate—this mixture is flattering to democrats. Besides, Old Hickory is not yet elected."

"As good as elected!"

"And if he is, and if he were a second time, we will make such arrangements that our Phalanx shall stand firm, and will break through at the third election. He is the last revolutionist, and that helps in the eyes of the people. When he declines, there will be no such popular favorite, and our candidate must succeed."

"I understand," I said, and I did understand.

Everything has two sides, and with us even more than two sides. Half an hour ago, I would have sworn, that it was real pure friendship for Doughby, and Emily, and myself, and Louise, that had brought my good friends up to me; warm, friendly interest in my fortune, which they had come to celebrate. Good Heavens! how busily they work the web! One might laugh at their childish weaving, if it were laughable. Yes, they spin threads which will reach from the Gulf of Mexico to Lake Erie and Champlain, and soon across to Huron; everywhere, where our so-called good families reside. An immense net, they are spinning, which will be ten times torn by the giant, called popular spirit, and as often woven again by thousands and thousands of lazy, yet busy hands. Like spiders, too, they withdraw further into darkness after every rent, but as often as they recover from the shock, they appear again. This it is, then, which has brought the wise Mrs. Houston up, and brought poor Emily down! Yes, yes, it was our aristocracy, or rather quasi-aristocracy! It is really amusing sometimes to look at the cards it plays; it is like a band of roving musicians, who can only play one air, but can play that perfectly; start whatever tune you like, sober or drunk, and they will chime in and play their tune. Our aristocrats are real cats; throw them as you will, and they alight on their feet. No means are beneath them; no lever is too weak—they can use them all, suit

themselves to all: give them a cuff on the left cheek, and they smile, satisfied, and hold out the right; but then look out for them! they pay you a thousand times back! they have already spun their threads from the town of brotherly love, and the Yankee city, across the whole Union: priests are their quarter-masters, old women are their heavy ordnance, and our boys and girls their light cavalry, with which they surround Uncle Sam, and try to catch him after the manner of catching a wild horse.

Yes, my dear Uncle Sam! you drive happily and merrily about on the great prairie of your glorious liberty, but beware, for dogs and hunters are multiplying to chase you! Take care, or they will draw a noose over your head, for they have many and various ones; and I almost believe, that if good George IV. had money enough, to send one of his brethren over, with a few hundred thousand pounds, payable at John Bull's banker, our precious Boston bluestockings, New-York men-on-change, and Philadelphia Tariff-men would be persuaded to give in their allegiance, and would run head over heels not to miss the first levee of the new American Majesty. Such a levee would be an excellent thing for our aristocrats, where the plebeian Democrats could only look on!

Yes, the race I speak of is a dear race, a sweet race, a little spoiled by vulgarity, and pale and billious, and in its veins is less pure blood than spoiled spirits; but otherwise full of the warmest feelings for thee, dear Uncle Sam! But you know them, and consequently have given them their passport. Only renew that passport for the next three hundred years, and you will find it for your advantage.

We will now see how things stand with our comforted and comforters. What is this? Hurrahs on every side of the steamer. Hurrah!—at him!—the deer! that's the cry. Hurrah! Hurrah!

What is going on now?

CHAPTER VII.

THE WATER-CHASE.

ABOUT five hundred feet from our steam-boat, a stag was swinging over from the right toward the left bank. The boat was already let down from our vessel, with five men in it, among whom, as might have been expected, Doughby plays a conspicuous part.

"There, you have him once more!"

cried Richards, sullenly. "In this fellow an evil spirit surely has its dwelling."

"Hurrah my boys! briskly on!" cries Doughby, brandishing a six foot gun.

And the four other men bent over their oars, and the little boat flew onward toward the stag, which courageously continued his watery way.

We had passed the mouth of the Black River, and were about to enter one of those picturesque windings, for which the Red River is distinguished. The primeval forest on the left bank, throws its shadow for a considerable length over the edge of the river, and the dark-green cypresses, together with the silvery gigantic cotton-tree, are reflected from the broad surface of the red water, while the right bank presents a lovely plain of the most luxuriant palmetto fields, from which spring here and there a bean or tulip-tree, upon whose branches the loud chattering of parroquets is heard.

The current of air comes somewhat cool from the side of the palmetto-field, but the surface of the water remains unruffled, except by the waves created by the paddle-wheels. The stems of immense trees, with which the river abounds, appear like porpoises rolling in the water.

The steamboat had just reached the point, where the shore of the bay was covered with dense wood, when a boat started out from the bank, which made the scene peculiarly romantic. It was a long Indian canoe, made out of the stem of a cotton-tree; from its beak a stag protruded, and dry haunches of venison were lying in its stem, and in its stern a maid sat, naked to the girdle. With graceful strokes of the oar, she quickly moved the canoe toward the stag; and before her there was an elderly squaw, rowing in the same manner. Two children were lying at the feet of the latter, and still further forward a man sat—who had apparently returned from the chase—in the perfect apathy of a genuine son of the wilderness. In the same canoe also was seen a handsome Indian youth, negligently leaning upon his gun, and evidently longing for an opportunity of killing the swimming animal, either by a shot or with his knife.

As soon as the Indians got sight of the other boat and the steamer, which was but slowly moving onward, they ceased to row, but after having encouraged themselves by a loud hurrah, they again put the canoe in motion, yet evidently endeavoring to keep as far distant as possible from the fire-vessel.

It was indeed a picturesque view to see—

on the broad blue-red stream with its bronze colored borders—the two boats from different directions hastening to prevent the stag from reaching the shore, while the steamboat-wheels in a manner assisted the sportsmen by cutting off his retreat. A shot from Doughby's boat had driven the stag to the side of the Indian canoe. In a moment a gun was discharged at him, but it missed its aim, and the young Indian struck him a blow, which at first stunned him, and then made him turn in another direction.

The young Indian now threw himself headlong into the river, the waves of which closed upon him.

"There he is again," cried Doughby, quickly pointing to the stag, which just then was approaching their boat.

"Briskly on, my boys," cried he again, "the Indians must learn from a Kentuckian how to kill a stag by one blow. Briskly onward, I say!"

But the noble animal had now recovered from the blow it had received, and turned toward the steamer, on which it cast a piercing—nay, one may well say—a supplicating look, so that our ladies unanimously exclaimed: "Mr. Doughby, be not so cruel as to kill the poor animal! do not kill it, do not kill it!"

"Not kill a stag, ladies! when did you hear of such a thing! Stanch, boys!" cried he, as he was now close to the stag. But the boat fluctuated: he missed his aim, but turning the discharged gun, struck with the stock a blow, which broke the gun in pieces, and drew the stunned animal at the side of the boat. With the speed of lightning, Doughby stretched out one of his hands to get hold of the horns of the stag, and the other to catch the knife, which one of his companions handed him, in order to cut the throat of the animal. At this moment, the stag threw himself with a desperate effort on the other side;—the boat tottered, Doughby lost his balance—the stag made a violent effort, and the man lay in the water, struggling with the stag, to the horns of which he clung like the tiger to his prey.

"Hallo! Mr. Doughby is in the Red River!"

The whole steamboat was in confusion. The ladies screamed—the gentlemen roared. We began to fear the result, because such adventurous chases often have a sorrowful termination. The much-stunned, but resolute animal, defended itself with great strength against its courageous foe, and threw him to and fro in every direction. Yet Doughby still kept his hold; but his

eyes began to stare wildly—his power apparently to flag; the furious animal seemed striving to run its horns through his body. It was in vain the four men in the boat endeavored to approach the contending parties. The man and the stag rolled around in the watery battle-field like water-sergeants.

From an interesting sport it had changed into an awful one.

"Shoot, Parker! shoot, Rolby!" cried several voices from the steamer, to the men in the little boat.

The stag had pushed Doughby to a stem of a tree, against which he endeavored to dash him by a last effort. Doughby was now in manifest danger, and a general cry of horror burst from all the persons on the steamboat—when just at the same moment, the head of the exhausted animal sank down, its eyes burst, and its limbs quivered in the agonies of death; but even Doughby began to sink, and a light stripe of blood, which shot forth from the water, gave reason to believe that the bold fellow was mortally wounded. Finally, the men who were in the boat got hold of the stag and of Doughby, who, drawn up by the hair of his head, still, with spasmodic rage, kept hold of the stag's horns.

A loud shout echoed from one end of the steamboat to the other.

To us this scene had been heart-rending. Doughby sat in the boat, staring and speechless; and he did not recover his senses until he stepped up the ladder of the steamboat.

"But for the sake of Heaven, Doughby, tell us if you are really beset by Satan!" cried Richards to him.

"Go to the devil!" exclaimed Doughby, "with your Red River water. Our Mississippi water is good enough, but I have no desire to drink it mixed with that of this cursed river. It is just as if one were to drink prussic acid, nitric acid, sulphuric acid, and all other acids in the world. But say, now, who gave him the finishing blow?" cried he, now standing in the midst of passengers and sailors; "who gave the stag the finishing blow?"

"Who else," asked all, "but yourself, Mr. Doughby?"

"I?" said Doughby, shaking his head. "Something quite different happened to me, than to give the stag his death-wound. The knife fell from my hand at the same moment the beast dragged me out of the boat. Hallo, my friends, there you see it!"

The animal, which was now hauled over

the railing, had a cut in the side, and the sinews of his hind legs were cut off.

"The Indian must have done this."

"What Indian?" asked all.

"The Indian at whose head Rolby would have discharged his gun."

"I only thought," said Rolby, "that he wanted to snatch the deer away from us, when he poked his copper-colored face out from behind the tree. I first thought it was a mere excrescence; but I soon saw that it was a red-skin, and then I wanted to put it into him. It would have been no loss. What right has a red-skin to meddle in gentlemen's sport?"

"It would n't have been a loss?" interrupted Doughby, impatiently. "The Indian, I, Ralph Doughby, tell you, has more honest blood in his little finger, than ten such pale-faces as you in their whole body, with all respect for your white color and citizenship. And I tell you, he is as noble a red-skin as ever lived. He saw that I was in danger, and came to my assistance. And now he is again in his canoe. Look over there—there he stands. No loss, you say! Stealing deer! Well, and who could prevent him, if he did? He had an open field, like us. The deer grows in his forest, as well as in ours. 'Open field, and no favor,' is our motto in old Kentucky. I tell you, the Indian is a brave red-skin. The deer is his—we'll buy it of him. Hallo, captain! a dozen bottles of rum into the boat! Howard, Richards, just lend me half-a-dozen dollars—silver dollars, you understand. I will pay a visit to the Indian in his canoe, and thank him, as decency demands."

And as soon as said it was done. The captain, though he stopped unwillingly, could not resist the generous fellow, who, wet as he was, jumped into the boat, with a bottle in each hand, and shouted to the savages a friendly hurrah! They at first looked at us, as if they were afraid; but the signs of peace and encouragement, given them from all sides, and above all the bottles, soon brought them nearer. One minute afterward, we saw Doughby in the canoe, shaking hands with each of them, and putting a bottle to his mouth. But little was needed to excite the savages to commence their war dance in the canoe, so mad they all were for joy, at the sight of the present; they shook the hands of the dripping Doughby so roughly, that at last he had to run away and seek protection against their compliments in his own boat.

This Doughby is indeed no bad boy: boiling hot, that is true, and always fore-

most when there is anything extraordinary to be done, but his heart sits under all circumstances, in the right place; and with all his impetuosity, he has in his behavior something so unartificial, so much ease—I might say grace, if this epithet could be applied to a Doughby. Mrs. Houston hung, with a really mother-like look, on the daring fellow; Clara's eyes were constantly resting on him, and even Louise, betrayed considerable interest—such Theaenus-like deeds ladies very seldom despise. Emily was impassible as ever, and sat like a beautiful marble figure in the back part of the boat, and on the opposite side of the deck.

"Were n't you frightened, Louise?"

Louise looked at me with a roguish glance, and then at her sister Julia, who at the same moment was covered with blushes: a ray of joy stole over the melancholy face of the girl. She seemed to be gaining a new physiognomy.

Louise threw a second roguish glance at Julia, and looked significantly into my face.

"What is the meaning of this, Louise? You look as if you wished to imitate Mrs. Houston."

She threw a clandestine glance at Julia, and put her forefinger to her mouth. There again is something *à l'improvise*.

We walked up and down the deck, waiting for Doughby, and somewhat anxious to see how the beautiful, strong-headed Yankee lady would receive the crazy Kentuckian. In about ten minutes he arrived, as proud and bold as a true son of the "*dark and bloody grounds*!" the bath seemed to have worked on him as a soporific. A haughty expression was on his brow, as he went up to the ladies, calmly bowed, and looked around, as if examining the effect which his appearance made. His glance was still gay, when Mrs. Houston and Mrs. Richards poured on him their reproaches for his rash daring. He stepped up to Emily, but she appeared absolutely indifferent, and did not even condescend a glance; but continued to look at the scenery of the river and the shore parties, through her lorgnon. He bit his lips, turned around, and ground his teeth with fury.

I stood in the background with my company. He ran up to me, tore me with impatience from the group, and, without taking time to pay his compliments to the ladies, whispered in my ear:

"Do you know, Mr. Howard, what I know now?"

"And what's that, Doughby?"

"That Miss Emily Warren and myself never can, and never will become a pair; even if a hundred Mrs. Houstons and Richards tried to make the match."

"Work, patience, and time, make a silk dress out of a mulberry leaf!"

"Not for the marriage robe of my bride, if it is to be her. No, better I remain single. Out, I say, it's out. After such a bath, to be received so! I really believe she would n't have given her thimble for it, if the fish in the Red River had eaten me up for supper."

"You are unjust, Doughby. Miss Warren saved your life, according to your own confession. But permit me to introduce you now to my wife. Dear Louise, Mr. Doughby."

The man knows how to behave, even if he did not learn his compliments from a French dancing master. He possesses a tact, a kind of innate dignity, indeed, a certain ease, which I never should have expected in him; but I have never before seen him in the company of ladies, and it is just there that the gentleman shows himself. Let me see a young man at the moment when he is first presented to a young lady, and if she does not measure him with the looks of a basilisk, and thus disturb his composure, I will tell you whether he is born for a gentleman, or will remain a blockhead all his lifetime. Doughby betrays talents; the answers which he gives to my wife bear witness, if not of refinement, of a desire to make a good impression; but his glance occasionally flies sharp and eager to the background.

I turned in the direction to which these arrows flew. Julia was standing between her two cousins; in her hands she held a half-withered rose, which she tore to pieces; her unobserved glance, too, fell sometimes upon the life-strong man, whom, it must not be forgotten, young Vergennes assisted in a brotherly manner at his toilet. He wore a cravat and chaussure of the newest Parisian fashion. I now began to understand the roguish glance of my wife.

"For Heaven's sake! my dear Howard!" he whispered to me, at the first pause which occurred during his conversation with my wife, "who is that wonderfully lovely lady?"

And with this he pressed my hand until it became black and blue.

"Permit me at the same time to introduce you to my sister-in-law, Miss de Menou—dear Julia, my friend, Major Doughby."

Doughby stood, covered with blushes,

before Julia; who, in her turn, likewise turned purple. His eyes began to sparkle brilliantly.

I was very much astonished, as he, without further ceremony, began:

"Of one thing I am sure, that Demoiselle Menou will not condemn the crazy, daring fellow, although he has caused her a painful feeling."

"Not in the least," rejoined Julia, blushing again; "but I will join my prayers with those of my new friends, that Mr. Doughby might exhibit more care for a life which promises to be so serviceable to his fellow-citizens."

And during her speech, she blushed more and more; Doughby did the same. This is what I call a sudden flame.

In the group, of which Madame de Duras and Mrs. Houston were the centre, a slight movement was perceptible, which indicated that the somewhat sentimental position of the new-made major and old hot-head had raised their attention. The ladies approached like battalions of heavy infantry, and the two phosphoric persons had to break off, although it was a difficult task for them. The Creole himself did not seem very well satisfied with their intimacy.

The conversation became general. Doughby stood as if on coals, and walked around me, very much like a duck who sails around the piece of meat thrown to her, and is about to sink. At last he succeeded in cutting me off from the *gros du corps*.

"Howard! my dear, charming, sweet, excellent Howard!" he whispered in my ear, while he pressed my arm as if in a vice—"Howard, my dear, charming, golden Howard!—for God's sake, Howard!—just listen, Howard! I tell you——"

"What is the matter, Major Doughby?"

"Hang the major! Howard, my dear, good, sweet Howard! a light has risen upon me. What do I say—a light?—nay, a whole forest on fire, my dear Howard! A word, for Heaven's sake!—one word, my dear, good Howard."

"But what is it? What's the matter with you, Doughby?"

"Ah! that would be the wife for me—that's the woman! She pleased me at first sight. There, no Mrs. Houston nor Richards necessary to preach to me now. She is the woman!"

"Doughby, you rave. I don't understand you."

"Howard, a word—only say one word, a single word;—one word, or I'll jump into the Red River, though it is full of acids!—

one word, or I'll cut my own and all your throats!"

"But, Doughby, don't be crazy. All these people see you, and they are shaking their heads."

"I don't care. I don't care for anybody but her. Yes, she is the girl, as I would wish it: not too thick nor too thin—none of your spindle-shanks. She is the woman! For Heaven's sake! Howard, tell me, ain't she? Tell me, is she—is she single?" he finally bolted out—"single or engaged, Miss de Menou? Yes or no?"

The man looked at me with wild, glaring eyes, which hung upon my lips, trembling with anxiety; his forehead burned, and his whole figure seemed convulsed. I believe, at that moment, he would have been capable of doing anything.

"Doughby! you are the strangest man I ever met with in my life. Only an hour ago, you cried, wept, and roared with despair, because Miss Warren had sacked you. Now, you are all fire and flames again, because a pretty face has crossed your path. That is not manly."

"For Heaven's sake! scold! quarrel! do anything!" cried Doughby, impatiently; "scold as much as you like, only tell me, is she single or not?"

"Single, as far as I know."

The man made a jump, beneath which the whole deck trembled, and all eyes were turned upon us; then he took me by the hand, and pressed it so that every joint cracked; a tear of joy came from his eyes, a second followed; he ran over the decks, down the stairs, and embraced whomsoever he found in his way.

Again he came up, and took me aside.

"And I tell you she will be my wife, and I her husband—her happy husband! I will carry her on to my lands. You thought that I was in love with Miss Emily? I almost thought so myself, because Mrs. Houston told me so. But now I know what it is to be in love. I knew it at the first glance I cast at her. She, too, was pained by my daring, my foolishness. I will never do it again. One word of hers will make me a lamb. I hate, I despise pride in a woman. I tell you she must become my wife, even if I should serve seven years for her, as Jacob did."

"Then you would lose your patience?"

"Do n't believe it; in us Kentuckians the fire catches at once, and is never extinguished; never, if only it is fed. It is just like the holy flames, of which I heard in Caldwell's theatre; but there must be a corresponding flame, and no icicle."

"Mr. Doughby!" said I, seriously, "I

must entreat you to be a man, and a gentleman; and to speak of ladies like Miss Warren, with the necessary respect, and without bitter feelings, as she does not deserve them from you. With your Kentucky wildness, you will never gain a girl of good education. You have pledged your word to Miss Emily, and made her offers; she has, as you deserved, rejected you. You have recommenced your offers, by the advice of your friends and hers: and I declare to you openly and freely, that neither Mr. de Menou, nor I, will permit you to entertain the slightest hope in respect to Miss Menou, until your connection with Miss Warren is closed honorably for her and for you."

"That is already done," said Miss Warren, whom we had overlooked in the heat of our conversation, and who sat in the background, gazing into the cypress forest. She spoke without rising, but with a grace and tenderness which, in one moment, again filled me with the highest respect for her. "The connection between Mr. Doughby and—" she paused, "is finished, with the knowledge and consent of my father. And I declare herewith, solemnly, that I release Mr. Doughby from all engagements toward me."

"As you like it," rejoined Doughby, with a trembling, almost suffocated voice, but in the most dignified manner.

"Just according to your pleasure," remarked Mrs. Houston, who had joined us, as soon as she heard Emily's voice; fury and bitter scorn painted on her features.

Richards and his wife had also come nearer, and looked over into the forests and palmetto fields. Julia stood farther off, pale, and with a throbbing bosom; Louise looked like a sea-captain, who has happily brought his ship into the harbor, and now looks comfortably out of his window, upon the three-masters, that beat with the storm outside; Emily was bright—in her features was something gay, earnest, and lovely.

"Take my declaration, Mr. Doughby, for what it is," she recommenced. "Far from upbraiding your quick temper, I willingly do justice to the noble spark, which, on so many occasions, shines from the depth of your heart; and wish you, what you desire, a worthy wife, who understands how to subdue your rashness, and who possesses sufficient tenderness to win your love."

The Yankees like to play sometimes the schoolmaster, the minister, the pedant—and it fits them well. When I saw the girl of seventeen—she is just nine months

over—preaching in this old fashioned tone to the Goliath, and saw the poor sinner Doughby standing before her crushed, I was strongly tempted to laugh in the face of both; but the girl continued, and spoke out so distinctly in the consciousness of female honor, that she was really imposing. This firmness, overcoming such an old gridiron as Mrs. Houston, and making even a Doughby tremble, speaks strongly for the character of the girl.

Upon the whole, the sudden blow by which this mighty and elaborate plan, which was to bring Uncle Sam under the government of the horde, was disconcerted, seemed very funny; and the glances which Richards and Clara threw around, reminded me strongly of the profiles of our captains, whose volunteer companies refused them obedience, at the very moment when these heroes would begin to defile before the windows of their *inamoratas*, preferring rather to strengthen themselves with a few slings and toddys at the next tavern. Mrs. Houston, as commander-in-chief, seemed inclined to look upon the quasi rebellion in a more serious light; but, meanwhile, the dinner bell rang, and the captain came to invite the ladies to the saloon. This new incident evidently brought the old chief into a new train of ideas, and the countenance of the serious duenna changed, gradually, into that of agreeable anticipation.

It is strange, really strange, that with us no sentimental emotions, exaltations, or whatever they may be called—nothing resembling tragic matter, will predominate. It is difficult to divine the cause! Are we really such a prosaic, everyday, material, and cold people? It almost seems, that even this subject, which, with a little more of despair, and a stronger pathos, could be used excellently for half-a-dozen French melodramas, promises nothing of this kind, absolutely nothing—for the despair and the pathos are wanted. We never think of theatrical display. Mrs. Houston seemed at once to have forgotten completely her defeat.

"Bless me!" she remarked, "three o'clock already!" The dinner had been postponed.

"Already three o'clock?" cried Mrs. Richards, almost grumbling, and with a very hungry face. "Aunt! how could you say so! Don't you know that I have a strong appetite?"

"Dear Heavens! how prosaic after such a torturing scene. A German lady would have been bathing in tears for a week, if

she would not have fallen into a diseased melancholy ; a French lady would no doubt have demanded pistols—would she not, Louise ?”

“ Say rather, rifles,” smiled my little wife. “ You seem to have a terrible idea of our ladies !”

“ I have good reasons—weighty reasons, Louise. I was conquered, overcome suddenly in the night-time, in a fright, and by a night-gown !”

“ How ! By a night-gown ?” laughed the ladies.

“ Upon honor, by a night-gown.”

“ Don’t believe him, Clara,” grumbled Louise, holding my mouth with her tender fingers. “ He is a miscreant !”

“ You must tell us the story, Howard,” said Clara.

“ After dinner. Now let us go. I remarked about a dozen horse and alligator faces, who might easily clear the table, before we have enjoyed the view of it.”

“ How ! They will certainly wait till the ladies come ?”

“ I doubt whether you will find New-York fashions in our enlightened Red River regions.”

So we had arrived at the door of the saloon, where we met the unhappy Doughby, talking passionately with de Vergennes. He had the latter’s English and French dictionary in his hand, and was eagerly searching for a word ; now he had happily found it, and cried :

“ *Venez Monsieur Vergennes, le dîner est déjà.*”

The young Frenchman stared at the speaker—the invitation was new and peremptory.

“ *Déjà ?*” he cried ; “ *at hour sair ? Is it late ?*”

“ No,” cried Doughby, taking him impatiently by the arm, “ *but I tell you, le dîner est déjà. Don’t you understand your own French ?*”

The Frenchman looked again at him with large eyes, then at us—and we at him. Doughby got angry.

“ Tell that stupid ass of a Frenchman that the dinner is ready,” he cried in my ears.

Now we knew what he meant by his *déjà*. He had unluckily translated ‘our dinner is all ready,’ into *le dîner est déjà*.

“ *Mon cher Vergennes, le dîner noses attend,*” said I, laughing.

“ *My tear sair Doughby,*” cried the young man ; “ *I understand your English better than your French.*”

“ They did not remain in debt to each

other. This really may be called murdering both languages,” said Mrs. Houston laughing, standing at the door of the saloon, and throwing round a look which expressed anything but agreeable surprise.

CHAPTER VIII.

A DINNER ON THE RED RIVER.

To tell the truth, the physiognomies which now present themselves before us, are not very inviting ; real gallows-faces are among them, and it is not necessary to be a Lavater or a Gall to discover clearly the tendency to stealing or murdering. And what odors ! the poor de Duras holds her perfume as tightly at her nose, as if it had grown to it. Some of our dinner company now looked like desperadoes ; and as if to preserve perfect consistency, each of them is armed with a dagger, whose horn shafts peep out of their breast-pockets. It is worth while to become better acquainted with this collection of human curiosities, and to learn their biographies. Merchants from Santa Fé, squatters, from Arkansas Territory, settlers from Ouachitta, trappers from the Sabine, emigrants from Colonel Austin’s colony, in the new land of brigands, Texas—standing, sitting, half-lying, their feet on the chairs. One has got his thumb on the table, and next to him sits another, whom the neighborhood of these moccasoned extremities seemed to suit very well.

The majority are standing up on the entrance of the ladies, discharging from their mouths a coffee-brown ichor, which could not have been more dispersed in all directions, if it had even come from a dozen fire-engines.

“ Rolby !” said one of the gallows physiognomies to the man, who was already engaged in the work, and who did not get disturbed in the least.

“ What ?” grumbled Rolby.

“ Rolby,” laughed a Santa Fé peddler, “ you might luff a little. Do n’t you see ? the females come.”

The fellow to whom these words were directed, was the same one who had so humanely thought it would be no loss to kill the Indian. He was a distorted, coppery, outdried scamp, on whom his thirty or forty years had printed a genuine gibbet stamp ; with pig’s eyes, red hair, and brown-gray, ugly whiskers—almost covering the whole face ; for it was evident that he did not use either soap or razor. He was sitting without coat or cravat, with his shirt sleeves

rolled up as if he was at work ; before him was a plate, on which were, six different pieces of meat, intermingled with potatoes and turnips.

"Here, Robly," said a second mule-driver, holding out to him his jacket.

Robly gave no answer, but put on his jacket and continued swallowing.

"I should like to know from what part of the world he comes," said a third.

Robly looked up, threw a dagger-like look on the inquirer, and proceeded again with the devouring process.

We passed the man in silence, and took our seats, according to the wishes of the majority, who, though not composed of the finest ingredients, was still the majority. The table presented a striking and picturesque view. At the head was the captain, in his quality of carver ; next to him the ladies Duras and Houston, Louisa and Clara, myself and Richards ; Julia and Emily, Vergennes, and Merveille and Doughby ; and next to him was the fellow Robly ; and farther down, the mule-drivers and the squatters, trappers and planters, peddlers and backwoodsmen, of all kinds and in all dresses, which contrasted strangely with the magnificent arrangements of the saloon, and especially with the elegant dresses of our ladies ; as strangely as Gurth's jacket of untanned skin contrasted with the waving silk dress of the Saxon Rowena and her spirited admirers. And judging by the terrible ferocity with which all fell upon the dishes, it seemed that the digestive powers of this party had not suffered much by the distance of five hundred years, and five thousand miles, which divided them from the time and the land of their Saxon and Norman ancestors.

Vergennes forgot his coat in his astonishment. Louisa looked, not on the backwoodsmen, but her eye was resting in smiling curiosity on Julia, then on Doughby, whom I had seated next to Merveille, in spite of all his pains to come next to Julia, which I earnestly resisted ; and he now saw and understood the impropriety of his question. But he is a Kentuckian, who speaks first and thinks afterward. Yet he sits so devoutly bent, that he could very well personify the heavenly messenger before the picture of St. Mary, in the cathedral of the capital. Indeed, it seems to me that he has now "hit the right nail ;" and if any one is adapted to him, it is Julia. Emily would not have suited him any more than a princess of the house of the Spanish Bourbons. These Northerners are too pure, too upright, for our fiery Southerners, on whom again the *vis inertia* of the soft, feeling

Creole, makes a deeper impression. A slight, but only very slight touch of indolence, or rather *laissez aller*, distinguishes Julia—who is active in her domestic circle, and will certainly subdue that wild power quicker than any one else. She is just the girl to suit old Doughby. Of the same height as Louisa, she is stouter, and more inclined to *embonpoint*. She has not the ease and the swift French grace of Louise, but a beautiful black eye ; Louise has light-blue ones : her bosom is somewhat full, but altogether to Doughby's taste, who, as I remarked, loves the substantial ; her skin is white as alabaster, and still not wanting in the necessary color ; in short, Doughby, to all appearance, has now found his ideal. He is certainly too impetuous ; women like a high daring, but not such desperate rashness ; on Julia he has made a favorable impression. I am only astonished how the girl could take fire at once, and in the presence of her rival—it is almost indelicate ; *sed trahunt exempla*.

We have finished with the soup—those at the lower end of the table have nearly completed their dinner. That's what I call clearing off in less than ten minutes. Half the table already looks like a field of battle. Mutilated turkeys and chickens, skeletons of quails, hacked-up hams and saddles of venison, with fragments of roast beef, cutlets, potatoe-peelings, and broken eggs, are spread over it promiscuously. It requires a strong stomach to retain one's appetite here.

"Now, you nigger !" cried a squatter in a leather jacket, with black, bristly hair, "you nigger, I want my soup !"

"Me no nigger, massa," grumbled the mulatto waiter.

"Nigger, or mulatto, it's all the same—just bring my soup !"

"What !" cried the man's neighbor ; "what ! after taking a plate-full, that might serve for a beggar's trough, of meat, fish, and potatoes ; and then laying in a second of chickens, turkeys, game, and turnips, you 'll commence again with your soup !"

"Free country, neighbor," replied the leather-jacket ; "a free country 't is we live in ; a man may eat soup when, and how he pleases, if he can pay for it. I'll tell you more : a man may eat soup if he can't eat anything else ; for soup will penetrate where substantial morsels can't ; and just because it is soup, it finds room, where roast beef or ham try to get in in vain. This soup is a mighty wonderful thing ; it is a kind of mortar, which unites roast beef with turkeys and potatoes. In my opinion

soup is always good, no matter whether it comes first or last.

"I'd like to know," said Doughby, for whom the silence which prevailed, while we were taking our soup, had already lasted too long—"I would like to know, what part of the world you might be from?"

"Where there are more buffaloes than tame calves, mister," replied the backwoodsman, laughing; "and you are probably from a place where calves feed on green cotton-seeds."

"Right!" said Doughby.

"What's the news with you? which way does the wind blow? North, north-west, or west? Is it a Jackson, a Harry, or a Johnny wind?" continued the man.

"All three blow," replied Doughby, "but the hickory is the strongest."

"Hurrah! for Old Hickory," cried the backwoodsman.

"I've told you twice already," began another young backwoodsman—"I'll thank you for a piece of that tart."

These words were addressed to the man opposite, who, holding the plate with the pastry in his claws, had already swallowed the better part of it.

"And I have cut it twice for you," rejoined the man, handing him a dessert plate with a very moderate piece of crust, across the table.

"And so you did," said the young backwoodsman; "but you did it like Jack, who jumped upon the horse's back into the saddle, and invited Ben and Sam to do the same; only, they must be satisfied with before and behind, while he would content himself with the middle."

"We are in a free country," was again the reply.

Meanwhile, our Madeira glasses were filled, while we ate the roast beef. We touched glasses and drank healths. When we were done, I turned to the company at the lower part of the table:

"Gentlemen, will you do me the pleasure, to take a glass of wine, to the health of our ladies?"

"And particularly of the bride, Mrs. Howard?" added Mrs. Houston.

After the backwoodsmen and drovers had each obtained a glass from the steward, they rose, and the young man in the linen jacket gave the excellent toast of our gallant Pinkney:

"I fill this cup to one, made up of loveliness alone;
A woman, of her gentle sex the seeming paragon;
Her health! And would on earth there stood!

Some more of such a frame!

That life might all be poetry, and weariness a name."

"Sir!" I cried, laughing, "really you

are a lover of the muses, such as I scarcely expected to find here in the Red River district."

"I sometimes read such a thing when it comes from a friend."

"From a friend? then you knew the gallant Pinkney?"

"Pretty well; we were what may be called pretty intimate acquaintances."

"May I ask your name?"

"Winfrid."

"How! a relative of the senator from South Carolina?"

"His son; now a planter, for the last six months, on the Red River, just one hundred miles above you."

Thus, with us, the points of social positions touch each other; and, by continual contact, smooth each other's harsh and rough corners. The son of a senator builds his hut on a piece of woodland, which joins the property of a Scotch drover, whose wife was probably the servant of the senator's daughter, who now meets her as a friendly neighbor, and returns every little civility with equal obligations. Thus necessity promotes with us, to a certain degree, that social republican system, which, in the West, spreads its roots, while in the East, amid the bustle of sea-port towns, it already withers.

"I would n't mind," again began the fellow called Rolby, "to take another glass of your wine."

"And I would n't mind if you were to move one house further," replied Doughby, with a glance anything but flattering. The man stared at Doughby, then his face changed into a most murderous grin.

"Will you take a glass of wine, sir?" asked Mrs. Howard, making a sign to the steward to hand it to the man.

"Bravo, my dear Louise!" I whispered to her; "this is acted and spoken like an American lady."

"I thank you, ma'am," replied the man, "I'll drink it to your health."

He took the glass the steward handed him, emptied it, half filled it again with rum, and drank the contents with, "Your health, ma'am, and here goes for Old Hickory!"

"I suppose I could take another one, too," cried the black leather-jacket.

"Then allow me to send you mine," said Mrs. Richards.

The man nodded, took the glass, and emptied it at a draught.

Both fellows rose, put on their straw hats and walked to the bar, to drive away the tickle, as they said, with a real horn,

and to continue their debates about Old Hickory. He, and his two fellows, Harry and John Quincy, are now the only topic heard upon steamboats, in hotels, the highway, drawing-room, anywhere, and everywhere.

Astonishment almost prevented Vergennes from eating or drinking. And well may strangers, who first visit our country, stare at such sights. With us, they do not even create a smile; the collision into which we are thrown by our ever-movable, unsteady, republican intercourse, is certainly not particularly agreeable. The faces which have just left the dining-room, are anything but attractive. The fellow who just turns his back to us has, in his cold smile, something that might be compared to a lurking congo-snake—a most devilish grin; thus a murderer must look, who coolly puts the steel into his victim's breast. But can we have all Washingtons, Jays, and Franklins? Is it not rather a necessary, absolute condition of our liberty, that citizens' virtues, as well as vices, should grow more luxuriantly, because they are freely permitted to grow and increase. And if the one outweigh the others, is not the cause to be sought in the circumstance, that crime with us is the natural drain of those fluids which emit their impurities by the bung-hole! The dregs, repelled by civilized society, collect naturally near the boundaries of civilization, in the West, where laws are still weak. Indeed, things frequently look terrible along these boundaries—a real scum is to be found there—gamblers, murderers, and thieves, among whom a respectable man's life is not safe. But these only last a short time; better ones follow, and the rabble retreat farther, before approaching culture and civilization, and before the laws, which grow too strong for them. But their doings have not been worthless. Against their will, they have been forced by want and need to clear forests, make paths through the pathless wilderness, and till the earth for better successors. With such wild, desperate characters, originated the paradisiac hills and valleys of Kentucky, the excellent farms of Ohio, and the magnificent meadows of Tennessee.

They have gone many thousands of miles—their works have remained. They have become the foundation of the happiness of millions of free, civilized, and religious citizens, who pray to the God of their fathers in thousands and thousands of temples, in places where formerly only the wild Indian hunted. We love to see the culture of our land break through unto the

borders of the second ocean; we love well to glide for thousands of miles down the gigantic stream, in our magnificent floating palaces, and, *en passant*, it may be said, collect a rich harvest of dollars from the extremity of our Union. We must not consider those men who help us in achieving these wonders, altogether worthless, and avoid any collision with them—the less, as there is many a respectable character among them. The mouth which breathes the mephitic vapors of the Mississippi and Red River swamps, is not fit to chew raisins; that hand which fells our gigantic trees, and drains our bogs, cannot be covered with kid gloves. Our land is the land of contrast—the land in which the life of man shows itself before our eyes as it was three thousand years ago, and as it is now. In our Eastern States, the highest culture exists—in some parts, even higher than the European, with many of the vices of their debauched civilization. In the farthest West may be seen that commencement of civilization as it was brought over the Black Sea by Saturn and Jupiter, who were in recompense adored as gods; and later, by Cecrops, from Egypt into Greece. These are contrasts which only a narrow mind finds unnatural. The humane and well-informed understand them at the first glance; they see the necessity, and submit to the disagreeable feelings which this collision creates, as it affords them a deep glance into life and social position.

Our ladies are not extraordinary lovers of this kind of philosophical experience; but it is a pleasure to see how well they, who really were not raised in a ditch, know how to find the *juste milieu*—how readily they discover the really human in these wild characters—with what care and freedom from fastidiousness they move in their society. An English half-pay officer would fall into fits, at least on paper. Not so, they: they look with the timid, soft eye of womanhood on them, and this works better on these wild characters than the thousand whips of a despot. There is no doubt that our ladies do the most in the civilization of the West. They become the judges of decency, the *thermæ* of the ancients, over those places where the law does not reach, or is not strong enough; before them, roughness disappears, and hardness melts. They kindle again the spark of humanity, and bring back the half-savage to civilization. They know their whole duty, and follow it with excellent tact. Indeed, there is no land where women are so much respected as with us—at least, in the Northeastern

States, where they have established a sort of petticoat government, and where Uncle Sam begins to become almost foolishly weak before them. In general, they deserve the respect which is yielded to them, and which has become almost natural, as natural to us as religion. Other nations are more gallant, for their gallantry is an inheritance from the Middle Ages; but in real respect for the sex, they are wanting—that respect, I mean, which is the result of virtue and nobility, as well as of the deeply-felt necessity of giving, through this devotion, a more tender relief to our stern republicanism.

But the time approaches, when we may hope to see the end of our journey. We have been eleven hours upon the water, and our steamer is celebrated for her speed. We have now to pass the great bay, and we are at our destination.

CHAPTER IX.

BLACK JOYS, WHITE SORROWS.

THE clock strikes six. The bay near my Tusculum is spread before us in all its brightness. The borders of the forest glitter in the rays of the setting sun. Still, we are surrounded by one mighty mass of water and forest; a magnificent, gigantic, primitive forest; a colossal vegetation of cotton, live-oak, bean and cypress-trees, varied by palmetto fields. Solemnly and majestically, the large deep river sends forth its chocolate-brown water through the darkness of the woods, to the glorious Mississippi, adding to the flat and somewhat monotonous landscape, an aspect at once melancholy and magnificent. Our party begin gradually to like our Red River, in such strong contrast with the all-destroying, devouring, impetuous Mississippi. Till now we have seen but slight improvements on the plantations on the northern banks. The habitations are for the most part cottages, built with logs rudely joined together, surrounded by little patches of ground, planted with tobacco, cotton or corn. Here and there are seen deer, which the noise of our steamer frightens back into the woods—with swans, cranes, ducks, geese, turkeys, and alligators, in countless number.

Vergennes trembles with delight and expectation. The desire of sport is satiated, for you have but to stand at your door, to bring down game of all sorts, and in as great quantity as you can desire.

We have now reached the projection of

the bay—a wide opening—extending half a mile along the bank, and back to the woods. The colossal evergreen oaks seem to rush toward our steamer in picturesque beauty. In their midst, within a hundred yards of the shore, there is a cheerful house, painted green and white, with its grass-plots fenced in—these are the future orange-gardens. A simple, middle-sized oak, with knots so firm and rock-like—it seems to have stood there since the deluge—spreads its stiff gigantic arms on the east side. The galleries are opened, the Venetian blinds are drawn up; my friends look for me with expecting gaze, each with the question, “What is this?” on his tongue’s end, but which only Mrs. Richards uttered. From the top of the house flutters the flag of our Union—those thirteen stripes, and twenty-four stars, with the white American Eagle, having the thunder of Jove, and the symbol of peace in his claws.

My heart beats more quickly. A second banner—that of Louisiana, unfolds its broad pennant toward the river. In front stands Bangor, guarding it like a sentinel. The steamer has caught his eye, yet he seems to doubt. Now he runs toward the house, very much like our rabbits—then he jumps half-a-dozen yards—then a scream, as though he felt the spit through him—anon he sits down holding his sides, and laughing like a maniac—again he runs a few steps, then spins round like a wheel. Any one who observed the negro from a distance, as I did, would certainly have imagined him crazy. Ah! now come rolling forth, Plato, and Tully—one bearing a stick or club—what it is, I cannot precisely determine: the other carries a pan of burning charcoal. Bangor runs to meet them, and directly claims Tully’s property as his own! Tully resists, snatches the pan from his hands, and the coals fly in every direction. The joyous rascals will set my house on fire under my very nose. They are capable of doing it, or of burning out each other’s eyes, without considering they are my property. Now Philip is coming up, who, snatching the stick from the hand of Plato, gives him a blow, in consideration of which, the latter tries the strength of his club on Philip’s knee. The club breaks—and—there they are—both running like bucks, or bulls, against each other’s sconces—once, twice, thrice. At the third butt, the philosopher Plato is humbled to the feet of the Macedonian Philip! The scoundrels! Our company on board the steamer laughed till ready to burst. I, myself, came near losing my

senses. To-morrow I must send both to the hospital for a week! Tully has cleared out with his pan, and runs like a madman toward the pole on the bank. Now I see what is the matter. They had brought down to Macon's plantation those two-pounders, the Wasp and Scorpion, as they have baptized them—two cannons formerly belonging to a Porto Rico pirate, who was captured last year by one of our cruisers, and who, in retaliation, was hanged with a dozen of his associates. His personal property, and with it his schooner, was sold at auction, and my father-in-law purchased the two cannons. Bangor renewing his claims on the pan, the coals again fly about—the gun explodes—and, like the trumpet of the Archangel, awakes the whole population, the wicked and the good.

A cry pierces the air—a cry the most penetrating, howling, yelling, that ever distracted human ears—drowning in its noise the roar and rush of the escaping steam: the whole plantation is in an uproar! From the fields, the cottages, the cotton-press—from all visible and invisible places, forth they rush—all black, black as ravens. I have lived so long among whites, that their black faces strike me strangely, and as the last rays of the setting sun gild the foreground, they seem to shine like so many Lucifers. Ceres, Venus, Psyche, Phœbe, (we have half the mythology at hand,) run toward the shore, with spoons, pans, baskets, and corn-stalks, with everything in fact they can lay hands on. Running after them, comes old Sybil, barking—Marius and Scylla, howling—dogs, cats, chickens, geese, men, women, girls, children—leaping, dancing, cutting capers, grinning, showing their teeth, with mouths stretched from ear to ear. Our steamboat gradually approaches them. They redouble their yells. Fifty scream at once, and in as many different keys. "Massa! massa—hurrah! massa!—massa come—massa come—quick captain, bring massa soon!—why captain no bring massa quick?—captain too slow! Why not bring them, massa? Massa be our own! Why not bring massa to maum? It be our maum! Bring massa to maum!"

My Virginian negroes cried the least, although they were born and reared in the family; but the women lifted their children on high. "See massa! see picaninny; it be massa's picaninny; dear little picaninny, massa's picaninny!" Bring massa to maum!" they again cried with one voice—at the same time dancing, leaping, turning somersets, as if a black Asmodeus had possessed them. There is much vapor in

all this exuberance, undoubtedly—and with slaves this will ever be the case. But the smoke mounts pleasantly—the incense smells sweet in our nostrils, and tickles our nerves excitingly.

After all, there is something vastly pleasant in thus playing the sovereign; and when at last we stepped on shore—the men surrounding us, dancing, leaping, and kissing our coats—I heartily confess I felt myself somewhat grown in dignity and stature. In my friends, I beheld no longer the look of question and expectancy. Satisfaction and increased esteem sparkled in their faces. Thus indeed we are, and it seems not in our nature to be otherwise. Our friendship, love, esteem—all our feelings and sentiments, must have a basis; and the stronger the basis, the more solid the groundwork—the more enduring the superstructure raised thereon.

A respectable house is, with us, a basis, upon which we found friendship, and even love. Without that which gives us a seat and a vote with our fellow-citizens, neither beauty nor virtue, learning nor nobility, are of any value. Mrs. Houston immediately looked on me with a different expression, while Richards and his wife became almost respectful.

Papa Menou, with Charles, my brother-in-law, came half-way to meet us; and the manner in which they received my guests, evinced, especially in the former, the born gentleman. Although far removed from the timidity of the Britons, we by no means possess the ease and *aplomb* of the French. Our manners are dry, positive, republican,—our imperturbability not easily ruffled, even by an unexpected reunion with friends unseen for previous years. Notwithstanding these nationalities, every movement of my dear Papa Menou expresses pleasure: he seems to have something polite to say to all of them, and appears quite charmed with Mrs. Houston. Toward Richards he is just as kind as if he had been his neighbor for years; and thus dispensing his courtesy, he seems to me like a sovereign, who has chosen to enact the part of lord high chamberlain at one of his own levees. He seems to read in every one's eyes what would please him most to hear. His animation is truly attractive, without being by any means vivacious. But what is this? has he all at once found a hair—my dear father-in-law? His brow is suddenly clouded, his lip curls like a lieutenant of our regulars, subjected to the commands of a militia captain. What may it be that has blanched his rose-colored humor? Is that man, then, really born for trouble and

folly? Indeed, it would seem so. Doughby is the cause of this commotion! With fervent flashing gaze, he stands behind Richards—fervent, nay, devouring are his glances, and Julia appears to have no objection to be devoured—she grows pale and red alternately—so lovely, yet so pensive; she raises her beautiful eyes—but to cast them down again, in soft confusion! At this moment, Doughby, who seemed to grow somewhat weary of this scene of reception, stepped before my father-in-law.

"Mr. Doughby, of New-Feliciania county, dear papa!"

"I have not the honor to know him," replied he, dryly, and with a slight bow.

Poor Doughby was put completely out of countenance; nevertheless, he seized Papa Menou's hand, and assured him he was very happy to see the father-in-law of his dear friend, Mr. Howard, who had drawn so fortunate a prize in that lottery in which he hoped to obtain a ticket."

The good Ralph became a little puzzled, while uttering these words, and it is indeed no wonder, for papa looked on him with such a strange, cold, ironical glance, that he speedily let fall the hand he had caught so enthusiastically.

We all felt annoyed during this scene, and much as I was pleased with the joyous antics of my negroes, the reception of my friend's somewhat hasty, but well-intended greeting, did not a little distress me. With characters like Doughby, we should always be delicate. The poor fellow fell back, looking for all the world like the failing candidate in an election for constable! but remark is impossible at this juncture, and we "bide our time."

We entered the house two by two, Menou, with the ladies Houston and Duras, following.

The parlor is splendidly arranged, with sideboards, chairs, and sofas. The four rooms into which it opens from both sides, are indeed preciously furnished, with acacia and citron-trees. The mats are very elegant, but how long they are to remain so, it is difficult to determine, for our habitations in Louisiana are absolute republics, into which, any and every one may enter, both by day and by night. Turkeys and chickens, ducks and geese, parade the stairs at all hours, as sedately as the ancient senators of Rome on the Forum. The heat drives them to seek shelter, and the draught of air passing through the building, renders them perfectly comfortable.

My guests, after casting some slight glances round the apartment, seat them-

selves for a few moments on chairs and sofas. Louise and I fly through the house. That lovely child has so much to see, to know. She too must, for a moment, make her appearance. The negroes will absolutely "see maum." "See maum!" "will see maum!" "Why massa no let his niggers see maum?" "It is their maum." And she smiled at them, and tripping down the back stairs of the piazza, "Here you have me," cried she laughing. "Here is your maum!"

The negroes leaped, hallooed, and danced around her; old and young kiss her dress, exclaiming:

"Now ready to die, right off—because seen maum!" "Now not give a piccalu for it"—"die—right away"—"God bless maum!" She laughed heartily, and promised them the wedding presents she had brought for them, and I promised the same; and then to see the joy, when I gave orders that rum, salt-fish, with other appendages to a substantial supper, be given to each of them! The scene leads me to forget myself, and my guests.

When I returned with Louise to the parlor, the ladies had already retired to the rooms Menou had appointed for them. Phœbe, Louise's little chambermaid, stood at the door of our apartment to receive us. We were just about to follow her, when Julia, pale and breathless, came running toward us. She trembled, and her bosom beat so violently that she seemed incapable of uttering a word. She seized my hand, and, visibly endeavoring to avoid her sister, drew me into the room.

"Mr. Howard! Mr. Howard!" gasped she, in great agitation, "I am to go home!"

"Home! and wherefore, dear Julia?"

"Papa has desired I shall go immediately, by the steamboat," sobbed the poor girl. "Papa has not assigned any room to Mr. Doughby," added she, with passionate impetuosity. "He did not even look at him! actually turned his back on him."

"In the hurry of the moment, probably he did not perceive him," said I.

She shook her head, and I could see there was a hitch somewhere, and somehow. Surely there is no situation more unpleasant than to find yourself in a manner compromised; to perceive a difficulty, yet be unable to remedy it, for want of knowing on which "*horse to place your saddle.*"

The good Menou should not affront Doughby, nor indeed is Doughby the man patiently to bear offences from a Creole, did he own fifty plantations; and the scorn with which he seemed to measure him, was too severe for the trivial occasion.

But in plain truth, the Creoles hold the Kentuckians on the wrong side of their hearts. The antipathy dates from the annexation of Louisiana to the Union; when, to tell the truth, they, like the ancient Huns and Vandals, rushed down upon the Mississippi. "A Kentuckian," in the language of Louisiana planter, "means everything uncouth and rude;" yet, in these days at least, such is by no means the case.

"Howard," said Julia, standing before me, as I stood reflecting what was the fittest course to pursue: "Howard!" said she imploringly, "help me!"

"Good Heavens! Julia, how can I help you? what can I do? Doughby shall have a room, certainly; but I cannot see what at present I can do more, and at the same time, Julia, I must say, I cannot understand how a girl of refinement, as you assuredly are, could permit yourself to be so completely overcome by passion for a man whom you have known but a day!—'tis scarce five hours, since you first saw him!"

"Nay, Mr. Howard," added Julia blushing, "if there be any truth in your supposition, the flame is not strong enough to consume me, I assure you."

"This vexation comes most inconveniently, just at this time, when my mind is already troubled. The storm rushes upon me from all sides; and as if this were not sufficient, you must come post-haste with your sorrows, by way of surplus."

"And then," continued I, reproaching her, "all this happened in the presence of a rejecting rival, who under your nose dismissed him! Indeed, Julia, a little more pride and self-esteem, *vis-a-vis*, Miss Warren, would not be superfluous."

"Howard! for Heaven's sake, Howard! if you knew —"

"What, dear Julia?"

"About Merveille."

"What's the matter with Merveille?"

"Peter Hilaire is coming hither on Thursday next."

"But certainly not to join you with Merveille—do not believe it; had it been thus, papa had named it to me, but neither I nor Louise know anything of it."

"That is because he has not, for the last three days, had an opportunity to speak with you," she replied; but her voice faltered, and she burst into tears.

"Last week Merveille asked my hand—papa agreed to his request—he will arrive to-morrow, and in the evening the contract will be signed. That is the reason Madame Duras is invited. Papa now

informs me, these proceedings have been arranged for the last six months."

"But, dear Julia, how can that be possible? when, as I tell you, Louise knows nothing about it."

"Oh, it was considered purely a family matter!"

"Is Papa Menou out of his senses?" I exclaimed. "What! that horrible, corrupt old Creole! with scarce an ounce of flesh on his bones, and not a drop of pure blood in his body!"

"His father is rich—he owns one of our largest sugar plantations, and a great part of the town. He will, on our marriage, return immediately to France."

"Joy go with him, say I, but not you, Julia. Why you never can take to your arms that walking skeleton. No, no! it must not be—Doughby is the man. His lineage is not very exalted, but his health is good, and he has not a drop of foul blood in his veins. He is, above all, a man of honor; and, though not rich, can support you comfortably in his own rank. He is the man for you, Julia."

"Oh! Howard!" cried she, blushing.

"Wild he is, I confess," continued I, "but the best, and kindest soul in the world. He drinks a little, and swears a good deal—but there is more sincerity in his heart than you will find in that of many a more polished man. In short, he is a very good fellow, who deserves to be supported; and I will see to it immediately."

Julia seemed a little comforted. At this moment Louise returned, to take her part in the scene, and behind her, on the same mission, the little chamber-maid.

"Do you know, Louise, papa has neglected Doughby—and Julia is going away?"

"And do you know, George," interrogated she, with dignity, "Mrs. Houston could scarcely have expressed her sentiments more clearly, for Julia has exposed herself in the presence of all the people?"

"I believe, dear Louise, if you were asked to marry that ruined old Merveille —"

"But Merveille is of respectable family, the principal branch of the Vergennes, and besides that, is related to us."

"Would you have accepted him, Louise?"

"How dare you ask such a question, impudent creature?" said she laughing, and tripped back into the room, unheeding my moral reflection, which was, simply, "not to do unto others as you would not they should do unto you."

However, I had no time to waste in superfluous preaching, and ran off to seek

my father-in-law. He was on board the steamboat, occupied with unloading the various purchases he had made at the capital, and which he had now partly disembarked on his way to the shore. Doughby came running toward me, in a perfect storm. The sun was setting—it was nearly dusk—dim as the light was, however, I could perceive he was in a state of perfect fury. He seized me immediately, gnashing his teeth—as though he intended instantly to commence a combat for life or death.

“Howard!” he almost howled forth—“Howard!” he cried again, putting his hands on my shoulders. “Howard! if any other man had done that, by my honor, his days would be numbered—he or I would have to answer for it. Howard! what have I suffered in your house! had it not been your father-in-law—and Julia’s parent—?”

“Calm yourself, Doughby—I know all, Julia has told me.”

“To turn his back on me, and leave me standing like a negro—not even a bow!—to assign rooms to all but ——”

“Quiet yourself, Doughby: you are my guest—I am the master of the house—come with me—I will give you a room somewhere—even should I give up my own.”

“No! no!” cried he, “I cannot stay, I will not;” and he walked on in his violence, hurrying me with him; suddenly he stopped, as though a sudden thought had struck him: “Tell me,” said he, “how old is Julia? Tell me at once, I beg of you—how old is she?”

“Why, what devil possesses you now?” said I.

“How old is she?” reiterated he, in my ear; “don’t you hear? Can’t you open your mouth? How old is she?”

“Why, Doughby, I believe you are as crazed as my father-in-law; what can you mean by this curious question?”

“How old is she?” convulsively gasped the madman, and nearly breaking my arm with his pressure.

“Nineteen years old,” replied I.

He turned upon me with such abruptness, he almost knocked me down; then seizing both my hands, he gazed into my eyes, eagerly and motionless.

“Will you give me that in writing?” he said at last.

“What for? What strange fancy is this?”

“You will give me that in writing, will you not? Yes, my dear friend—my sweet, dear, golden Howard! you will do it, will you not?”

Thus speaking, the poor fellow pulled, nay, almost carried me to the house; and, willing or unwilling, I was compelled to go with him.

“Give it me!” he whispered, “give it me immediately—quick! quick!”

To appease his madness, I hurried to my writing-desk, seized the ink-stand, tore off a sheet of paper, and having written as he desired, I signed my name to the statement, and delivered it to him.

He took it, and after reading it several times, put it carefully in his pocket-book, then commenced muttering to himself, musingly: “No, no; after all, this will be of no avail!”

I looked at the man, and really he seemed to me to be totally mad.

“Come,” said I, soothingly, “here is your room. The Frenchman and Creole may help themselves. In my house the Americans shall never stand in an inferior position—no! even if the foreigner be my cousin, or brother-in-law.”

Without suffering me to finish my speech, Doughby grasped my hand and disappeared. The shaking of the windows announced the arrival of a steamboat. I followed Doughby. Within fifty yards of the house he stopped. I ran toward him, amid a crowd of my negroes, who certainly deemed us both mad. Doughby had already reached the shore, from which Menou came to meet us.

“Have you seen Mr. Doughby?” said I.

“No: I come from Alexandria. Some one passed me just now—possibly it was *your friend*.”

And he laid peculiar stress on the word “friend.”

“He is much hurt—nay, almost mad, at the affront you have passed on him; and, indeed, I cannot account for your having done so. He is a young man much esteemed in the Middle Mississippi, and my particular friend; yet you have acted toward him in a way that has expelled him from the house.”

“I expelled him from your house?” demanded Menou, impatiently.

“I cannot use any other term, if, on an introduction, you turn your back on him. Surely, you leave him no alternative but to seek the nearest negro-lut, or corn-fence, for a night’s lodging.”

“More fitting habitations for him, probably, than the abode of gentlemen,” replied Menou. “Mr. Howard,” continued he, more seriously, “I am accustomed to converse with gentlemen, barbarians, and boors. I treat as such, and never will receive as a gentleman, a man who insults

the first principles of civilization in such a degree as does that wild Kentuckian."

"But Mr. Doughby has certainly not, as far as I know, at least not in your presence, committed any outrage on the customs of society."

"Is it not an outrage to exchange amorous glances with a daughter, before the eyes, and without the permission of her father?"

"The exchange of amorous glances, I know nothing about. Mr. Doughby saw Julia for the first time, some four hours ago. She affected his heart deeply—and I confess I see nothing wrong in this. He is free, young, and single; has acquired a tolerable fortune, and is in every respect capable of making a young lady happy; and if you will attribute the simple circumstance of his eyes expressing more than polite usage sanctions, to his wild Kentucky nature, you will discover that not the slightest offence has been given."

"I thank you, Mr. Howard," replied my father-in-law, "I have discovered quite enough." And with increasing irascibility he continued: "You are master in your own house, and can of course receive such friends as you choose; but you must excuse me, if, on my own part, I decline any approximation to this rude and uncultivated Kentuckian."

"By Heavens! this is the most unaccountable language I ever in all my life listened to! You are mortally offended at that, of which any other father would be proud! You are offended because a highly respectable man entertains a fervent attachment, and honorable intentions toward your daughter—and, ere the man is himself quite aware what he would say or do, you repulse him inhospitably—because he has not asked your formal consent! What American girl is there, I would ask you, who would deign even to look on the man, who should, on such a subject, speak with her father ere he addressed herself? According to my views, neither Doughby nor Julia has, in any way, merited the treatment they have this day undergone."

"I see," interrupted Menou, "you have your American views; well, I have my French ones—and thank God, the laws of my country are with me."

"That may be so, but you certainly will not seek to prejudice, or oppose your daughter, in the most important event of her life?"

"And who am I?" asked Menou proudly; "am I not the father of my child?"

I looked at the man, and perceived in a moment, that in point of fact, I was actu-

ally conversing with a Frenchman, born in America. These men are the tyrants of the domestic circle; commanding and ruling their wives, sons, and daughters, as they permit themselves to be commanded and ruled by those in higher positions than they are. The French are, indeed, a singular race; and it is most singular that their descendants, although educated, polite, civilized—I should say *tamed* somewhat—cannot comprehend even the elements of true freedom—their nature is thoroughly despotic.

The fate of poor Julia grieved me to the heart. "You are indeed a father," said I, after a pause—"then why will you not concede to your child that natural liberty, of which every American girl is so justly proud, and without which, connubial happiness cannot exist?"

"Mr. Howard, although you are descended from an ancient and noble English family," replied Menou, "you seem to understand but little of the maxims which should guide every family of any pretension in reference to connection, and matrimonial alliance. Upon your principles, respectability of descent would soon be lost amid the common herd. It is precisely because the poorest girl is free, that our daughters despise a freedom which places them on a level with plebeians."

"Then I take sides with the million. Your observations are admirably adapted to the court of Versailles; but in this country, believe me, my dear father, you will lose by such opinions; and for my friend Doughby, I must beg you to suppress your feelings in his presence, for he is not the man to submit patiently to insult."

Well, do not let us waste words on this vile Jackson man, this barbarous Kentuckian!"

"Let him be a Jackson man, what is that to you? Mrs. Houston is for Adams, Richards also; and I, for my part, had as lief have the devil, as either of the three candidates; but Doughby is a friend of mine, of Mrs. Houston, of Richards, and of thousands, who, in politics, are his antagonists. Surely you will not designate all as enemies, who entertain political opinions opposite to your own?"

"If not enemies, certainly not friends, and I would not permit them to be connected with my family. You are master of your own house, Mr. Howard, as I am of mine, and I cannot allow interference in my family arrangements!"

"The disgusting fear which troubled

Julia so much, is to be realized then, and that miserable Merveille will——"

"Pardon me, Mr. Howard, Monsieur de Merveille is the son of one of the first men of this state; one of the wealthiest sugar planters—owning a considerable property in the capital. Of such men we are accustomed to hear, and speak with respect, even if they are not so nearly connected with our family. He is descended from the principal branch of the Vergennes, who have settled in Louisiana; and the name is still held in high estimation at the Tuileries."

But, good Heaven! what is the Tuileries to us?"

"I allowed one of my children," continued Menou, "a '*mariage par inclination*;' it is but just, then, that the other should make some trifling sacrifice to the disarrangement of my affairs, especially as she will be indemnified for the sacrifice ten-fold."

And as Menou spoke, he looked, felt, and acted, as an adroit and versatile courtier.

"She will live in France!" exclaimed he, "*Elle verra la belle France—la glorieuse France—ah! France! ah! Paris!*" and he rubbed his hands.

"But, my dear sir! are you not American? native American?"

"I am native of France!" said Menou, proudly. "*Je suis Français, né en Louisiane, quand Louisiane était Française—je suis Français!*"

I turned away, thinking to myself, "you are a fool." With all respect for the French; in the scale of American citizenship—pshaw! they weigh lightly. To be a free native American citizen, is the highest privilege—the most glorious attribute; and he who would carelessly discard, or relinquish it, is like the foolish Esau, who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. I cannot bear such a fool.

At this moment Doughby came running up; as soon as Menou saw him, he turned his back.

Doughby bowed, and was about to leave.

"Hold on, Doughby, you must stay here. No folly."

"I will come another time; now I must leave——"

"You must stay, I tell you."

"No, I will come another time."

"Doughby, you offend me."

"I am sorry for it, Howard, but I must go down the Red River." And off he scampered—halloed to the steamboat, which was already in sight—gave his name, and the escape of steam immediately gave notice that his summons was answered.

"Doughby," said I, as I reached his side, "be prudent, I beg of you."

"Let me alone, Howard, if you love me—I beseech you seriously—let me go."

"Doughby, you must, you shall return with me."

"Not this time, Howard—not this time," and he ran along the shore, and cried "Halloo!"

I had just seized the tail of his coat, as he sprang into the boat, almost dragging me into the river. I was half mad, thus to lose a brave and dear friend—a mad-cap to be sure—but who had enough of honest blood in his body to make men of a dozen Creoles. Then the quarrel between myself and my father-in-law—I confess the scene had disgusted me. That theatrical "*je suis Français!*"—pshaw!—I have a horror of such impotent, such sapless pathos. Those Creoles will never become Americans. Affection, liberty—they never take into consideration. "Convenience" is their word, and they conclude the marriages of their children—sign contracts—and consummate sacrifices just as calmly as despots.

When I entered the parlor, I met the captain of the Alexandria taking refreshments—the mariners received their's on board. Julia stepped forth from her father's room, followed by her black servant, who carried baskets and packages in her hand. She was pale, and in tears.

"Mr. Doughby is gone down Red River," I remarked. "Now, I hope, Julia may remain."

"Mamma is at home alone," answered Menou.

"*Ma chère fille,*" he turned to his daughter—"tu vas voir Maman?"

"*Oui, papa,*" replied poor Julia, sobbing.

"*Tu diras, que nous viendrons demain.*"

"*Oui, papa,*" again stammered forth Julia.

"*Va ma petite,*" said the man, and kissing her on the forehead, he embraced her.

This all looks remarkably well, but for my own part, I prefer the fair squeeze of the hand of a true American father.

The captain had emptied his glass, and rose to leave. Menou commended Julia to his care, and both of them went out, accompanied by us till beyond the door. At this moment Louise reëntered the parlor, after a second excursion and voyage of discovery.

"Dear Louise, your sister is at this moment gone down the piazza to the steamboat;" and away she flew, following her sister, and embracing her.

Va ma chère Julie, nous viendrons bientôt—"mille baisers à maman"—"*ma petite bonne Julie!*"—*va, ma chère adieu ma petite bonne Julie*—"

In ten minutes she was back again. "*Mais papa qu'as tu fait?* Horrible!—*qu'as tu fait?*"

"*Mais ma petite chère Louise*—"

"*Qu'as tu fait?*" exclaimed Louise once more.

I imagined this sympathy—this emotion, concerned the departure of her sister.

"*Les rideaux*—blue and red silk curtains in Mrs. Houston's room—blue and red!—Horrible!—horrible!"

"*Mais ma chère Louise;*" said Menou, in a softened manner; but Louise was not to be softened.

"In the room of Aunt Duras! poplar-green, and coquebicat red! abominable! *viens voir, papa!*" and forth she hurried papa, who needed not to be hurried, but ran with all speed to the rooms, to view the horrible commixture of poplar-green and deep red; and forgetting, alike, Julia and her troubles.

"That I call true light French blood," laughed I, half-mad at their unfeeling frivolity, nevertheless.

Having drawn her father through all the rooms, she came at last to ours; where innumerable boxes and packets were opened, and lace, silk, children's caps, stockings, peignoirs, shawls, Indiennes, gauzes, and Heaven knows what, were spread about, covering all the chairs, tables, the sofa, and even the bed.

"But, my dear Louise! surely there is time enough for these things! And papa, to what purpose is this extravagant profusion—this waste of clothing, so much money laid out unnecessarily? Why, such a dowry would befit a French princess!"

Louise laughed.

"This dowry, indeed!" said she. "Ah! you know little of the dowry of a French princess! Why, that of the Duchess de Berri," exclaimed she, in high admiration, "cost thirty-two millions of francs! Oh! splendid!—oh! beautiful!" said she, rubbing her hands. "Your dowries are something like fifty negroes!"

She laughed, and hurried back to the saloon. The other ladies now made their appearance. Now they are busy—all talking together; some to review or approve, some to arrange, and others to classify.

Upon the whole this divertissement suited me, for it served to divert my guests, and withdrew their minds from the remembrance of Doughby, who was evidently a favorite with all. Menou sees no longer

the friendly faces that smiled at his reception. The replies of Mrs. Houston sound monotonous, almost cold; and Mrs. Richards seemed determined to let him feel, that the man whom she thought worthy of her company, shall not be injured unavenged.

This is just as it should be, and their independence of opinion does them honor, but it places me in a peculiar and somewhat painful position. I am, as it were, a sort of neutral party, between two warring powers; and both parties look on me doubtfully, as if uncertain to which side I rightly belong—each is alike afraid to trust me. The steamers have left—the review is partly over—the rest is to be done to-morrow.

We approach the supper-table; but though it is splendidly provided—Menou having brought from above a cook, equal to any at the French restaurateurs in the city—the true spice, hilarity, is wanting; and by eleven o'clock we are all in bed.

CHAPTER X.

QUITE SURPRISING.

TABY was delivered of twins at five o'clock this morning. Sibyl came running, threw open triumphantly the door of our chamber, pulled the musketo-nets apart, and cried in my ears: "Massa! massa! be happy. Two picaninny—Taby two picaninny! Massa maum, two picaninny, Taby have two picaninny!"

Thus she ran on five minutes. I rubbed my eyes. Louise had already jumped up, thrown a wrapper, which the black had handed her, around her, and departed before I was well aware what was going on.

I rose also, put on a dressing-gown, and met her on the stairs, already on her return, and conversing warmly with her papa:

"*Mais papa!* what did you do, papa? papa, how could you do so? Every room in the house engaged? where can poor Taby pass her confinement? She certainly cannot remain in her cabin? Papa, how could you be so forgetful!"

And papa strikes his forehead.

"*Mon Dieu, tu as raison, j'ai oublié!*"

But he finds help. Merveille and Vergennes have to retire to the vacant house of the overseer.

"But here am I," said Charles, "and our three negroes have our other rooms."

"*Oui, oui.*"

"Well, then, put Taby into Charles's room, for the negroes leave to-day."

"How!" cried father and daughter. "What! with us it is always customary to have women brought to the back-parlor during that time. It would be inhuman; no family of standing does otherwise. Merveille, you will give up your room, won't you?"

The noise had awaked Merveille.

"With all my heart," said he; "on our plantation, women in that situation have every precedence."

I looked at the man, and almost laughed at the assurance with which he spoke. A conspiracy per month happens on his father's plantation, who is an insatiate devil; and has his negroes flogged so unmercifully, that he has very often been in danger of his own life; and yet the new-born babies have to occupy the saloon! These Creoles, below New-Orleans, are perfect butchers, who raise their human flesh like calves. But Mrs. Houston also approved of the removal of Taby to the house. She also made her appearance on hearing what had occurred.

"My children, and women who lie in," she said, "are always in the back-parlor, and near me, so that they may have every assistance, and that I may have my eye always upon them. As long as I did not do so, out of thirty children I did not save six. You cannot believe how careless and inconsiderate these negro-mothers are."

"Well said," added Menou and Louise, with the air of judges.

And immediately the procession gets under way to pay a visit to the woman, whom the joy of yesterday relieved of her burden, a fortnight sooner than she anticipated. Mrs. Houston and Madame Duras led the way toward the negro-village. All inquired in a friendly manner after the state of Taby, who keeps chattering in one strain:

"Oh, massa maum! two picaninny, massa maum! two picaninny for massa."

It is of no use to tell her to keep silent, as her health might suffer; there was no end to "massa, picaninny!" Mrs. Houston had gone to her room and returned with a red silk kerchief, which she presented to her; Madame Duras added a white one, and Mrs. Richards a blue; so that she had the three revolutionary colors. Let any one say, now, that our negroes are treated with inhumanity; the birth of a prince could not have created more excitement and confusion.

Even Doughby is forgotten—our breakfast has to wait, till Taby is brought to the house, and put upon a bed, which the first lady in the land might have rested upon.

The clock struck nine, ere we, in the best humor in the world, sat down to our *dejeuner*. The two little rascals had come quite *à propos*, and, as it were, as mediators between me and my guests—touching the chords of sympathy, they awoke the softest tones of harmony.

As I said, we all sat comfortably and merrily at breakfast, when the shaking of the windows again announced a steamboat. I send Phœbe to look whether it came up or down—"down," was the reply; upon which I left the table, to give some commissions. It was the Montezuma, which came by, and approached my landing. A large mass of passengers were upon deck, mostly Red River backwoodsmen. I walked several times up and down the landing, waiting the arrival, when I suddenly heard my name called in a most familiar tone.

"Howard! Howard! How do you do, Howard?"

"Who is this? I know that voice?"

"Howard!" it cried again. I look—as I live it is Doughby. How does he happen to be aboard the Montezuma? Yesterday he went up on the Red River steamer; and I thought by this time he would have been in Woodville. Strange! yet it is Doughby, who seems too anxious to await the landing of the boat. Now it touches the shore, Doughby, with a jump reaches it, and falls into my arms—yes, in my arms, anti-American as it may appear.

"Howard!" he cried, almost unable to speak for joy—"Howard, now I am a man!"

"Doughby, you are heartily welcome. I am rejoiced to see you."

"I am a man now, I tell you!" cried Doughby, pressing and squeezing me. "A man, a happy man! Yesterday I was but half a man—but half. Now, Howard, now I am a man!"

"Glad to hear it, Doughby. But I thought you had gone down Red River, and were at home by this time, or nearly so."

"You thought so? and so did I, yesterday; but things turned out otherwise—better, I tell you. I am a man, a happy man!" he cried exultingly.

I looked at him again, and shook my head. The man was all joy and merriment, but foolish.

"At all events, Doughby, you are welcome, very welcome. But where were you? where do you come from?"

"I hope so—I hope," continued Doughby, laughing. "Where was I? why, at Squire Turnip's, man!"

"At Squire Turnip's!" I cried, aston-

ished. "Good Heavens! what did you do at Squire Turnip's?"

"What did I do there, man?" cried Doughby. "You shall hear it, as well as I can give it to you; you shall hear all—hear all the particulars. You will be astonished. I am astonished myself, and don't know how it was brought about. It still seems like a dream to me, and I sometimes have doubts of my own good fortune. But there is no longer any reason to doubt, man; I have it in black and white."

"What have you in black and white?"

"I'm man and wife!" cried Doughby, triumphantly bringing his note-book from his breast-pocket—"Man and wife, Howard, I tell you—with Julia de Menou, I tell you—black and white, I tell you! Here it is."

"The devil you are! You are a fool!" I cried. I actually thought he had gone crazy.

"Man and wife with Julia!" he cried. "Here it is—black and white."

And, on my honor, so it was! Here in my hand I held the certificate of marriage, contracted between Ralph Doughby, Esq., of New Feliciana, La., and the virtuous, modest Demoiselle de Menou, Rapides county, of the same state, by John Absalom Turnip, Justice of the Peace, &c., and signed by the same respectable gentleman.

I was petrified.

"But, man, are you both possessed?"

"Why possessed? Howard, we were wiser, smarter, and more sensible than you, Menou, and all together. We did the most sensible thing we could do. Why should we spend our precious time in fooling and courtship? I hate these long courtships. 'T was done at once, as we do it in old Kentucky."

"But Julia—how could Julia forget herself so at once, so suddenly?" I cried.

"Hallo, Howard! mind what you say. Do you hear? you are my brother-in-law, but you must not talk about Julia. She is my wife, I tell you—I am her husband—we are man and wife. If anybody says anything against it, let them come! I'd like to see them! The devil she has forgotten herself! No! she did right."

Doughby's temper was up.

"Hark ye!" he cried, taking hold of both my arms. "When I saw Menou making faces, thinks I, 'he may be a very good man, but he has very little manners for a *Mounshur Tonson*, else he would not have turned his back on me.' I shall not forget that so soon. He is the first that has ever done it to me, and he shall be the last. I saw pretty well that I would have

been perhaps obliged, after all, to draw off empty-handed, unless I made some capital stroke. So I thought——"

He stopped to take breath.

"I felt so strange," he continued, again taking me by both hands, "that I can scarce tell you. It was lucky for him, that I was so much in love with his daughter, I tell you candidly; he would otherwise not have fared well. I was as mad as I ever was in all my life; I ran up and down, back and forward—I hurried about without rest or quiet; I could not remain in the house, I ran out, and as I came back, whom should I see but Julia—my sweet, dear, lovely Julia, who, as if sent by Heaven, looked timidly around to see if anybody saw her. At one leap I was at her side. 'Dear miss,' says I, 'excuse my not addressing this horrid Demoiselle to you, for it won't come out—miss is so much shorter. Dear miss,' says I, and there I stuck again. I could say no more, could not bring out another word; if I could, may I be shot like a buffalo, or drowned in your Red River, bad as the water is."

"My dear Mr. Doughby," said she, and pressed my hand in return, for I had pressed hers; she pressed it again, but so gently, so easy—and yet, Howard—by jingo, Howard! I felt it in every nerve. 'My dear Julia,' says I, 'I must go. Your papa'—and I pressed her hand again. 'Dear Mr. Doughby,' says she—'ah! yes, papa—I must go too; I must go home to-day;'—and again she pressed my hand, and a pearly tear hung in her eye. 'Dear Julia! I love you, love you till death! I love you as I have never loved. You must be my wife, or none.' 'But papa,' said she, pressing my hand, turning her eyes to the ground and weeping. 'For Heaven's sake! my papa,' she whispered; 'if papa should see us,' and she draws her hand from mine, turns from me, her tears flow faster, and I became so frightened that I thought my heart would burst out. 'I may not,' she sighed; 'my papa. Oh! Mr. Doughby, if you knew how miserable I am!' and she wept aloud. 'You shall not be so—on my soul, you shall not. Devil take me, if you shall! You shall be happy—the happiest of women, and I the happiest of men; I swear it to you. You shall be happy.' She raised her tearful eyes to me, and looked at me to see whether I was in earnest. Suddenly she tears her hand away, and turns; 'Ah, my papa!' she cried, as if a dozen mad bulls were after her."

"But, bless me!" I cried again, "how could the girl be so indelicate, so unwomanly——"

"Devil take you with your prate!" cried Doughby, impatiently. "Do you think a girl full of life and fire, is made of stone, not of flesh and blood, like yourself? To look at you—kissing, playing, and cozing with your wife, and Richards with his, and her having no other expectation than playing the nurse all her lifetime to this old, wornout, lazy Creole. Do you think girls like such things?"

And such was the case. Excited passions on the one side, fear and disgust on the other; in the midst of this conflict, Doughby appears, and who wonders that she should grasp the saving hand!

"Continue, Doughby."

"When Julia said, 'Doughby, my dear Doughby! if you knew, how miserable I am!' my heart began to feel so queer, so happy, yet so sorrowful, I cannot tell you. I now knew she liked me; but I also saw that her father liked me about as well as our horses like polecats. I again left the house, I met you, and suddenly a thought enters my head—I asked you how old Julia was? 'Nineteen,' say you. 'Can you give it me in writing,' I said. 'Yes,' say you. I would take it in writing; why or wherefore, I do not know, yet 'twas pure instinct. Then Menou and the Red River steamer came down the river. When I saw again your father-in-law, I became like a crazy man again—would be off on the Red River, and instantly home. I hurried to the bank, and hailed the captain; he sends the boat, I jump in, and away goes the steamer.

"We pass the Alexandria, and I feel as if all hope of happiness were parting from me. I hurried to the captain: 'Captain,' says I, 'you must give me a yawl quickly, and let me return on the Alexandria.' 'Mr. Doughby,' says he, 'I hoped to have had the pleasure of your company on the trip.' 'I have forgotten something,' I answered, 'something of great importance; I must immediately return.' 'I will wait for you,' said the captain, 'till you return.' 'You need not wait,' I said; 'only quick with your yawl.' The yawl luckily was still in the river; I jumped in, and in five minutes I was on board the Alexandria. I hurry on deck, tell the steward not to say a word that I am on board, and also give a wink about it to the black chambermaid; instinctively, I hurry to the state-room, next to the ladies' cabin, look into it, and throw myself on the bed—why or wherefore, I cannot tell; it was pure instinct.

"Thus pass ten to fifteen minutes, which I thought to be as many hours, for

time never passed so slow in all my life. Suddenly I hear female steps, voices, then weeping: I listen more attentively, for it was Julia's voice, Julia's sigh. She wept, and no one consoled her. Oh! she sighed so touchingly, that a rock must have had pity on her. I felt sore and happy on hearing it."

"Doughby, we are standing in the sun," I interrupted him here. "Come, let us go into the shade!"

"Hang your sun, and your shade!" replied Doughby, holding me tighter. "Let the sun alone, it will not burn your brain as much as women have burned mine. When I heard Julia weeping so much, I thought if only that infernal papa does not go along. Meanwhile steam was getting up, the boat gets in motion, the engine begins to work; and as soon as I observe that we are away from land, I leave my berth as light as a cat, open the door of the state-room, and jump into the midst of the company playing there around the table. The captain stood looking on; that was not right, but on your Red River they are all a miserable rabble."

"Just as they are on your Mississippi. On your steamboats it is just the same."

"It is exactly so at hotels. You have the choice of good or bad," said Doughby.

He stopped a moment, then he continued: "Dear Mr. Doughby," they cried all, 'how you have frightened us!' 'I frighten you? that would require more than I can do,' I said, laughing. 'You are nice people to be frightened. But hallo, boys! silence, I say; I have to talk a word with the captain here, in private.' 'Go, captain,' they all said; 'go with Mr. Doughby, for Mr. Doughby is a man—that you are, Mr. Doughby.' I was glad to hear so from these fellows, who, though no better than they should be, were still fellow-citizens. 'My dear captain,' says I, when we were alone on the upper deck—"my dear captain, you must do me a favor; and if you will do it, I'll not forget it, as long as I live. You are a good Missourian," says I, 'but you have true Kentucky blood in you.' 'That I have,' says he. 'There is a girl on board your steamer, who is mine, whom I must have—I mean Julia Menou, man.' 'Man, you are crazy!' says he, 'it is Demoiselle Mencu,' says he, 'the daughter of the richest man on Red River, one of the first Creoles!' 'And if she were a daughter of old Nap,* she must be my wife, and I her husband; and if I would

* Napoleon.

have to break my neck, or what not,' says I. 'For your wife, you want her? that is another thing,' says he. 'Did you think Ralph Doughby would ask anything wrong? Confound you, if you did! when did you hear any dirty tricks of Ralph Doughby?' says I. 'Who can say anything against him? I'd like to see that man, I would.' 'That is all very true; but I can do nothing in the matter, Mr. Doughby,' says he, 'for the girl is confided to me, and I am a gentleman, and she is under my protection; there she must be safe; not a hair of her head can be touched; she must be safely delivered at home.' 'And so she shall be—and who has anything to say against it? who? I'd like to see such a man, and I'd soon make him forget it—I would.' 'Just so,' says he; 'I know you are a man of honor, Mr. Doughby,' says he. 'I'm glad to hear it, captain,' says I; 'but my dear, good captain,' says I, 'one thing you must do for me, and a mere trifle: You must help me to the chance of whispering a few words to this dear miss!' 'Mr. Doughby,' says he, 'I am captain, and must not interfere in such things,' says he; 'the honor of my vessel,' says he; 'what would my owners say?' says he. 'Mr. Doughby, ask me what you like; but this is a pure impossibility,' says he. 'Your honor shall not suffer by it,' says I. 'And all the world shall praise you for the honest service you have rendered to a Mississippi planter. I say it, Doughby,' says I; 'and Doughby is the man who may say such a thing,' says I. 'I know—I know, Mr. Doughby,' says he, 'but I must hear first before I can promise.' 'Above all, tell me if she is alone,' says I. 'She is alone,' says he, 'with her black girl, who is the only person in the ladies' cabin; and nobody else shall come in, unless she wishes it, as it is against the rules. And if she is a real lady she will not wish it.' 'Well then, send in your black girl to whisper to her maid, that there is a gentleman who would speak to her mistress. No, on better thought, just let her come out, and I will speak with her myself.' 'I believe you could do that best yourself,' says he. 'I must not give my people a chance to speak about me,' says he. 'You're right,' says I; and hurried to the wench who had care of the ladies' cabin. 'Massa,' says she, 'what you tink?' 'Nothing bad, Molly,' says I; 'you may be by, and if everything goes well, make a dollar, or perhaps two. And Molly laughs, and promises, and curtsies, and hurries off, and ten minutes after she returns with the maid of my dear

charmer, who approaches timidly; but as soon as she recognizes me, claps her hand with joy. 'Molly,' says I. 'My name's Dolly, massa,' says she. 'Well, Dolly,' says I, 'here is something to buy a silk kerchief and dress, and silk stockings and shoes, but you must promise to assist me;' and Dolly squints at the X, which I hold in my hand, and promises to do what she can. 'You must persuade your mistress that she will permit me to see her.' 'Massa, for-gosh! what you tink,' says she, 'what ole massa will say? Papa let poor Dolly be whipped, and sell her to sugar plantation, among the field nigger.' 'If Dolly will do what I want, she shall be and remain the maid of my wife, Miss Julia, and have another ten dollar bill,' says I. And she shakes her head, but reaches for the money, and promises to do all she could; but could not tell the success. I start her off; run after her, and put my ear to the door of the saloon, and listen, and listen, and expect every moment to see the door open, and my little charmer fly out. But that was no go; I heard the girl pray and beg Julia to permit Mr. Doughby to come in, as he was quite a different man from Mounshur Bearmill, though the latter was more elegantly dressed; but then he could scarce walk, and that his breath smelt so strong, that he could scarce be endured. But Miss Julia would hear nothing of a conversation with me.

"And I lay on the sofa, writhing like a worm, particularly as I understood, from what the girl said, that this Bearmill was the bridegroom whom her father had destined for her, and whom she was to be married to, day after to-morrow. I felt several times as if I would jump into Red River, and make an end of my sorrows at once. My heart beat and pressed, as if it would burst every moment. Julia wept louder; but she would not hear of my waiting on her, as it was improper, and ordered Dolly not to say another word, or she would tell it to her papa. And I had to listen to all this, and only a plank between me and my charmer; and I could not go in, nor she come out. I saw, myself, that it was not very proper, and I could not have respected her had she done it; and yet I would have given thousands to see her for a moment.

"And this continued for three full hours. The moon stood high, and I looked up! Suddenly a light on the left shore, glimmered into my eyes. I felt so strange, Howard; it glimmered like a ray of hope, and a queer sensation ran through my whole system. The captain stood beside

me, and looked also. 'What plantation is this, captain?' says I. 'It is the house of Squire Turnip,' says he, 'only a sort of a plantation; he has a couple of niggers and a store.' 'Turnip,' says I, 'Absalom Turnip—is he not from Louisville, or that neighborhood?' 'Do n't know exactly,' says the captain, 'but he is a Kentuckian, and as good a man as you can find. He is justice of the peace—Governor Johnson made him so. I have to leave a couple of boxes of goods. We'll stop a quarter of an hour.' As he said this, Howard! a light flashed upon me, as I may say, a sudden dawn. 'Stop half an hour, captain,' says I. 'I can't,' says he. 'Half an hour, I do really beg of you—Doughby begs of you.' 'I really can't, but we'll see,' says he. 'And captain,' says I, 'you must go in to Miss Julia,' says I. 'That I can't, Mr. Doughby,' says he; 'I must not mix myself up with these things,' says he; 'I dare not interfere in such matters, Mr. Doughby.' 'On my soul,' says I, 'you are not a Missourian; you have no Kentucky blood in you; you are a cold mackerel-blooded Yankee. I have not seen so disoblighing a man in all my life.' 'Well, well, Mr. Doughby,' says he, 'how you do carry on and rave again? you are right away all fire and flames,' says he. 'Who the deuce would n't be all fire and flames, when one has to do with so disoblighing a man.' I was really angry at him. 'But then what can I do?' says he. 'Do,' says I; 'you shall do nothing—but listen to her sighing and weeping; you should just only go in and say, that you heard her weeping and lamenting, and that you had come to inquire if she wanted anything? whether she would have a little fresh air, a glass of lemonade, orgeat, or anything else, over here at Squire Turnip's.' 'Fresh water,' says he; 'Squire Turnip has not a drop of water equal to what we have on board; he has Mississippi water, Mr. Doughby; and orgeat!—what are you thinking of? he drinks his toddy.' 'How stupid you are!' says I. 'What! are you a Missourian, and captain of the Alexandria, and you know nothing, and can see nothing? If Squire Turnip has no fresh water, we have some, and orgeat with it, and hands and feet to bring it over.' 'Mr. Doughby,' he said, laughing, 'you are deuced wise.' 'And you are deuced foolish,' said I; 'though you are otherwise a smart man,' says I. But again he shook his head, and asked what I meant to do. 'Hang your niceties and notions,' says I; 'what would I do? why talk to her, when she goes on shore; and

I hope you will not consider it a crime, if Major Doughby, of New Feliciana, wants to speak with a miss. Believe me, my respectability is of such a kind, that I may speak with a girl without anybody finding anything wrong about it.' That operated, for he found whom he had to deal with. 'Major,' says he; 'I had quite forgotten that you were a major; pardon me, this is the first time I heard it—but I'll do all I can,' says he.

"Meanwhile we had reached the landing. I jumped ashore toward the house, and the first man I met was Squire Turnip. 'Squire,' says I, 'I am Major Ralph Doughby, of New Feliciana, and must introduce myself, as the captain is too busy. I have the pleasure to know you by name, as also your family on the Cumberland. 'I am glad to see an old Kentuckian; what can I do for you?' 'You can make me happy, squire—my dear squire—I tell you, happy, if you will; it is entirely in your power, my dear, good squire! You are an old Kentuckian, I tell you, who has more true blood in his little finger, than a horse could swim in; I hope to be shot, if it ain't true.' I thought I'd have to lay it on thick, to get the quicker at my object. But he laughs, and says, 'If I can serve you in anything not contrary to law, Major Doughby, I am your man.' 'That you can, squire,' says I, 'and do a good deed, and have my thanks besides. I will be short, for my time is short too. I have a little girl aboard the boat, who likes me, and whom I like, and we'd like to become one; but there is an infernal papa—a Creole papa, and a dried-up, rotten sort of a bridegroom, whom the old man prefers. Now, I'd like to come the preventive game over them; that is, if you will assist me.' 'A Creole,' he says, 'for a Creole woman? hark'ye, Mr. Doughby, a Kentuckian always helps a Kentuckian first; but there is some difficulty about this, for, you know, these Creoles always take a great deal of command over their children.' 'I know that,' says I, 'but my charmer is *sui juris*, and loves me; and is to be forced to take another man, whom she hates like a polecat, for her husband; and it certainly would be strange of you, if you would not assist me, under such circumstances!' 'And who is your sweetheart?' says he. 'Julia Menou,' says I. 'What! the daughter of the rich planter above me? No, Mr. Doughby,' says he, 'then I won't put my finger in your pie. The old fellow will bring a law-suit upon my neck, that would break me.' 'Let me look out,' says I; 'if he puts a law-suit

upon you, I will pay the cost; I will give it to you, black upon white; but he won't sue you. If I have the consent of his daughter, who is *sui juris*, I care not for ten fathers.' 'But have you her consent, and is she *sui juris*?' 'Do you think, squire, that Major Doughby would tell you a thing that was not so? Here it is, black and white,' says I, and gave him your note; 'this is from her brother-in-law,' says I, 'Mr. Howard, a man as good as any man in Louisiana,' said I. 'But he is too much of a gentleman,' says he. 'The devil a gentleman is he! a plain, simple citizen, and as good a democrat as anybody,' said I."

"And you are a fool," I rejoined, laughing. "What! am I no gentleman?"

"Let me alone," replied Doughby; "don't you see that Squire Turnip is a stock-democrat, and thinks as much of a gentleman as a sugar-planter thinks of rats that spoil their cane and sugar? When he saw your paper, says he, he would see; but had first to hear whether the girl was willing, and that I would have to look out for respectable witnesses. I told him the captain might be a witness. 'No, major,' says he, 'you must not take the captain; it looks like a plot; have you nobody else?' Then I remember H——, the son of the Senator. I name him. 'That is the man,' says he. 'Very well,' says I, 'in five minutes I will be here again.'"

"I run back to young H——, whom I told to come along immediately; I tell him in a few words what I intend doing, and ask him to be my witness.' 'Yes,' says he, 'and I will lend you my wedding ring for it.' 'Thank you,' says I. 'Go to Squire Turnip's and wait for me at the door. I must see what my charmer is doing,' so I run to the ladies' cabin. Just as I run along, I see the figure of my Julia coming from the cabin, and, in company with her maid, walking across the gangway and toward the squire's house. The squire receives her at the bank, and begs her to walk into his house and make herself perfectly at home. He conducts her to the parlor, leads her to a seat; she sits down, and he and the captain go to look after the landing of the goods; his wife, he said, would be in immediately to wait on her and try to entertain her.

"And just as he leaves the parlor, I enter; walk toward Julia, and throw myself at her feet, while she screams out. 'My dearest Julia,' says I, 'here we are at the place. One word from you, and you make me the happiest of men, I make you the

happiest of wives, and you will never rue——'

"'Mr. Doughby,' says she, 'what are you about?' 'Nothing, Julia, nothing—we are in the house of Squire Turnip; Turnip is a justice of the peace, and as respectable a man as you can find on Red River. Don't be frightened,' says I, 'heaven has brought you here, has brought me here also—has brought us both here together; and if you now have the courage, the determination to make your's our fortune, we shall both be happy for life.'"

"And she looks at me, and her bosom heaves as if she would choke, and she cannot utter a word.

"But I beg of her, and tell her, the moment had come, and that the squire could unite us; and if she did not make up her mind now, in ten minutes it would be too late, and she would be torn from me, I torn from her, and we both would be torn from each other.

"She bursts out crying, and sighs and wrings her hands. I beg her not to be afraid; that I was a man of honor, known as such, and if she feared me, I would go; for I could see that I would have to stand back for Merbill.

"And she shudders, and wrings her hands, and cries again, so much that a stone would have taken pity on her.

"And, says she at last, 'If I could think of such a thing, or you propose it—my papa——'

"And I tell her that her papa had no right to force her to take Merbill, and that she was past eighteen, consequently *sui juris* according to our laws, and that if she agreed to-day, to-morrow all would be well, and her papa would be reconciled; and that no papa in the United States would refuse me his daughter."

"You have a pretty good opinion of yourself," I said, laughing.

"If I had n't, who would have it?" replied Doughby. "But don't interrupt me, else I won't get through till to-morrow. I begged her, and I prayed her, and told her that everything would end well; and just as I lay on my knees before her, and she sits on the sofa, I grasp her hand, she bends down like an angel, I jump up, impress a kiss on her lips—a good, long kiss—and the squire enters. She is frightened, and hides her face in a kerchief. And the squire steps forward, and asks her, smiling, whether she intends to take the respectable Major Doughby, of New Feliciana, for her husband. And she looks at him, and says, 'Ask my papa.' And the squire says, that this does not concern

him; but that she, according to the testimony of her brother-in-law, Mr. Howard, who was a perfect gentleman and a man of honor, was *sui juris*, and might dispose of her own hand; consequently, if she had no objections, he would unite her with Major Doughby in the bands of matrimony. And, with tearful eyes, she looks at me, then at the squire; and the squire goes and fetches the book, and all the rest; and the lights are placed, and the squire's wife comes in. He whispers something in her ear, and she hurries and brings her own wedding-ring, and H— lays his along with it on the plate; and the squire says, 'Major Doughby and Demoiselle Menou, walk up; and since you have expressed a wish to be united in matrimony, I will unite you by virtue of the authority vested in me.' And Julia staggers near, draws back again; I bring her up, and we stand before the squire. And the squire nods slow, begins to read his form, and asks her whether, of her own free will and consent, she would take and keep Major Doughby, of New Feliciana, for her husband? And she sighed, 'Yes.' I had said it before; and before Miss Julia was aware of it, she was Mrs. Doughby; and the squire and his wife congratulated her, and I embraced her; but she sighed, 'My papa;' but I told her that her papa should not harm her. I would go down immediately, Mr. Howard would help me to pacify him, and all would go well. This again quieted her. It was particularly the circumstance that you had given that note, which induced her to it.

"She became finally more quiet, and the squire and all left the room. I cast myself again before her, and thanked her that she had confidence and courage, and promised that she would find me a husband who would carry her on his hands, and that she should not be afraid—I would pacify her father; and again she bends down her tearful eyes, falls into my arms, and I press a long kiss upon her lips. Then the captain knocks at the door, and announces that he must start; and her black girl comes from the corner of the parlor, where we had entirely overlooked her. I raised my wife again into my arms, kissed and begged her to be quiet—that to-morrow, or, at farthest, the day after, I would be with her, and we would both be happy. She left, and I accompanied her to the steamboat, thanked H— and the other man, begged them not to disturb my wife in her sleep, rewarded whoever was to be rewarded, and returned to Squire Turnip—as Julia's husband

"Yes, I am Julia's husband," cried Doughby, again taking hold of my shoulders; "and I would like to see the man who'd say the contrary."

"But, Doughby, what will Menou say? To-morrow, the marriage contract between Merveille and his daughter, was to be signed."

"But I have got the bride—all the luck; the luckiest leads the bride home. I'll lead her home, that I will, even if I should storm the plantation! That's what I came down for. I was over night at Squire Turnip's, who gave me some good advice; in return I left my written obligation, that all disagreeable consequences which might arise from this step would be borne entirely by myself. Early this morning I went on board the Montezuma—and here I am. I still don't know how it all happened—whether I am awake or dreaming—but I'll see old Menou."

"Leave that alone, Doughby. At least wait till I have prepared him for this Job's message."

"What preparation—what Job's message? What sort of language is that, Howard? Job's message! I am not leprous, that you talk to me about Job."

"But a madman—a fool you are, who has put me, Julia, Menou—in short, our whole family into an uproar, the end of which cannot be anticipated."

"Howard! my dear, good, sweet Howard! you're partly right; but help, I pray you, help to bring everything in order again. I am a Hotspur, that's true. I am one—was one; was perfectly mad—now I see it; but I'll become wise."

"Heaven grant it; but now come with me to the steamer, and remain there to the moment the gangway is hauled in—then come ashore, but not sooner."

"But wherefore? why not immediately to Mr. Menou?"

"Why? because the same Menou, if he hears what has happened, and the steamer is still near, might make a cross through your account. Why? he is capable of going to New-Orleans, and commence a law suit, which will take your bride and half your property. You know, here, they have the code Napoleon, which gives to fathers more rights over their daughters than we have in the middle and northern states."

"I believe you are right," said Doughby, pressing my hand; "I'll take your advice."

We went to the steamboat, where I gave the captain my commissions; told Doughby again, not to come too soon on shore, and then walked to the house.

CHAPTER XI.

THE STORM.

My head was on fire, while thinking of the trick which had been played upon my father-in-law; and to which, though innocently, I had contributed my share. To push one's self into a respectable family in this manner, after an acquaintance of six hours, was really too bad!

My brain burned more and more as I approached the house, whence Menou issued as I put my foot on the steps of the piazza. He had, from the window, seen me debating with Doughby, and was evidently in ill humor.

"Where have you been so long, Mr. Howard? We have been waiting for you, to take a tour over the plantation."

"It seems now too late for that, for it is ten o'clock; the sun is high, and very hot."

"Because you stood in the sun; but you look quite embarrassed, or I might say, disturbed. What news? Have you received ill news from home? No misfortune. I hope? Perhaps Julia? My dear, dear child!"

"Nothing of all this. Julia is well; but something has occurred, papa, that might drive one crazy!"

That moment, the steam blew off several times with great noise; a man ran across the plank, which was immediately pulled on board. Menou became pale when he saw Doughby approaching the house.

"I can see, Mr. Howard, that I must leave a house where they are playing with me behind my back," he said, much offended.

"You are very wrong there, and the judgment you have just uttered is wrong also. I am not in the habit of trifling with anybody, least of all with a man to whom I owe so much; and if you knew how much I am pained——"

Doughby approached with hasty steps; Menou had turned and entered the saloon.

"I must speak with him!" cried Doughby; "I must and will speak with him. I'll know how I stand, and what I have to expect."

Saying thus, he hurried past me up the steps and into the saloon.

All met him with a "Welcome, Doughby;" but all stopped instantly, for the storm was written on the man's forehead.

I had also entered. The death-like silence was only interrupted by the song of the negroes, and the crying of the new-born

infants from the back room. Doughby stood before the table, evidently struggling, but unable to speak. The sudden silence, the expectation upon every face, had made him mute.

"My dear papa," I began, "something has occurred, which might easily enrage you—but I beg you to consider the passion of the man, who is withal a most respectable citizen."

Menou sat in silence, looking at Louise, who had taken his hand and pressed it to her lips.

"Papa," she began, "something has occurred that will make you angry; but since, as I have said, the attachment of Mr. Doughby is honorable, and he is acknowledged of unblemished character——"

"But what does that concern me, Mrs. Howard?" said Menou, turning to Louise. "I have no doubt that Mr. Doughby bears an unblemished character, but have good reasons to wish for no nearer connection with Mr. Doughby."

The tone in which this was said, was decided and firm. Doughby changed color.

"Mr. Menou," he began; "I have taken the liberty—I have committed a piece of madness—a real madness; but, 't is done!"

"I have nothing against it, if Mr. Doughby commits as many mad or crazy tricks as he likes; I must only wish that I may not be troubled with them. I, at least, do not wish to be made a subject of his mad pranks."

"I am sorry to say, Mr. Menou, that you are the object of them;" Doughby burst out in real Kentucky fashion.

"I the object of your mad pranks!" said Menou, rising proudly. "Mr. or Major Doughby, I know you Kentuckians take liberties, which we would not take, as good manners forbid it; yet I do not believe that I am the man, with whom any Kentuckian would allow himself to take liberties."

"With you, Mr. Menou, I have taken no liberties, and would not; but with your daughter, Demoiselle Menou—at least she who was Demoiselle Menou—she is so no longer—in one word she is Mrs. Doughby—since half-past-nine yesterday, married to me, as you may perceive by the marriage certificate, signed by Squire Turnip."

A cry of surprise was heard from every lip, when Doughby held out the certificate to Menou; but all suddenly became silent again.

Had heaven fallen in, or the Mississippi with its thousand streams, and steamers,

and ships, and boats, and New Orleans on its back, come rushing up the stream, Menou could not have been more surprised; his whole body seemed petrified; his eyes hung out as if they would burst from their sockets; his mouth opened and closed convulsively; froth came to his lips, which soon turned black and gray; his face was ashy pale and his gaze vacant. Louise was frightened, cried for help—my guests surrounded and supported him. He was on the point of fainting.

Suddenly he cried:

"Away with the wild Kentuckian; away with him! Take this barbarian from my sight! This Jacksonist—away!" he cried, tearing himself loose, jumping up, and flying like a madman about the saloon. The man had become furious. "Away!" he cried to the servants.—"Away, I tell you! drive him off! Take knives, axes, clubs; drive him away—this barbarian! Away!" he cried, running to the window. "Away, I say! and the steamer shall stop immediately. Hold!" he cried, tearing down the blinds. "Stop, captain! Charles, Bangor, Tully, away! get the steamboat to stop!"

We all stood astonished, and as if cold sea-water had been thrown over us in a winter storm. Charles had run to the stable, taken a horse, thrown himself upon the unsaddled animal, and before our eyes galloped to the shore after the steamer, which already began to round the wide bend which the stream here forms. In no case could he overtake the steamer. The old man became still more furious.

"The wretch shall pay for it!"

"This dishonor!" interrupted Louise—"this dishonor upon our house!"

"This dishonor!" cried Menou again. "The villain! the infamous wretch! to put such dishonor upon us!"

And he ran out of the house, through the negro village, crying and howling. There was a storm on all sides. His thirty negroes came with axes, forks, and sticks; the hogs grunted, the turkeys cried; men, women, and children all yelled, and howled, and roared. Doughby had been standing, all at a loss at the breaking out of the storm; but hardly had he heard the last words from Menou's mouth, when he broke out like a barrel of powder into which a glowing coal is thrown.

"What!" he cried, jumping up, and rushing from the house after Menou—"what says he? Infamous, he says! Is it Major Doughby he calls infamous? A dishonor, he says, I have brought upon his house!—a dishonor upon him! What!"

he roared, jumping upon Menou, like a lion upon a gazelle—"what! does Mr. Menou think he has a nigger before him?—do you believe you've got a nigger, Mr. Menou?—do you think that? An infamous wretch, you call me?"

He roared so loud, that a train of swans, floating down the river, turned frightened.

"You call me infamous!" he cried again, taking Menou by the arm, and holding him. "A dishonor I brought upon you!" And he took him by the second arm, and lifted him up like a twelve months' old child. "Do you think you've got a dog, and no citizen, before you?—a citizen, to whom every house is open, who is not afraid of a hundred thousand Creoles!"

"He will kill papa! he will kill papa!" cried Louise. "George, Merveille, he will kill papa!"

I had run, with Richards, to tear my father-in-law from the hands of the madman, who held him before himself, and jumped around with him, and only put him to the ground again after we had come up.

"I won't do him any harm," cried Doughby. "But does your father-in-law think he has a dog before him? I am Major Doughby, of New Feliciana, citizen of these United States, and he is nothing more—no man in the world is more; I can stand by the side of any one, and he calls me infamous!"

Doughby jumped a foot high in his fury, and became more crazy yet. Menou trembled, and was unable to utter a word, for shame and confusion.

Merveille came running with a pair of pistols; I tore them from his hands, and threw them far away. "Silence, Merveille! do n't make the mishap greater still."

"He shall pay for it!" cried Merveille.

"I tell you," cried Doughby; "I married your daughter like a man of honor, because she wished it—not just because she wished it, but I did; and at last she consented to my prayers. Who has got anything to say against that? She is past eighteen years. I have asked her, she has consented. But I will be shot if I ever touched her. 'Go, dear Julia,' I said to her, after Squire Turnip had fulfilled the marriage, 'go home; I will go to your father, and tell him what has happened;' and she went. Squire Turnip and young H— are witnesses. I should like to see the man, who says that I dishonored you or your house. I should!"

"Mr. Menou," said Richards, "if the affair is really so, Doughby has acted rashly—with unpardonable rashness; he even

acted crazily, but no dishonor came over your family through it."

"He has dishonored our house and family," said Menou in a low voice. "I cannot pardon him that."

"No—no," cried Doughby, "I have not dishonored your house. He who says so, has to do with me. Your house, is my house; let him come who claims your house—I'll take hold of him like a bull-snake, and break his neck, by Jove! that I'll do. I begged Demoiselle Julia—her who was Demoiselle Julie, now she is Mrs. Doughby—I begged her, that 's true, I conjured her to give me her hand, I told her I would make her happy, although I am a hot Kentuckian; and in the fright of her heart—in the fear of falling into the hands of the used up Bearmill, she says yes, and the squire says it also—and who else has anything to do with it?"

"I, sir!" said Merveille, who had snatched up the pistols, and came up to the man, holding one in each hand.

"You v'e got to do with it? You are the Bearmill?" cried Doughby, with a look directed to the man, half of astonishment, and half of contempt.

"I've got to do with it," hissed Merveille, "and if you are a gentleman, we will finish the affair quickly!"

With these words he held out both pistols to him. I ran to part them; but Doughby had been quicker.

"So, you are the Merbill who wants to gain my bride? you are him?" and he had already snatched the shadow of a man by his coat-tails, with three fingers of his left hand, and held him up like a string of dried apples.

"Hold, Doughby!" I cried. "Hold! and leave Mr. Merveille—he is my guest—or you will have to do with me! This goes too far. Indeed, you are a savage!"

At this moment Merveille lifted the pistol and shot at Doughby. The ball stripped his right arm. The ladies came running and crying.

"Away!" cried Doughby, pushing us back with the wounded arm. "Away, I say! he might shoot his other pistol also; a little bleeding can't hurt. Leave me alone, dear Howard! a girl like Julia is worth shedding blood for. I won't do anything to the poor fool—I'll only show him with whom he has to do. Who would hurt such a poor devil, at whom, without that, the land-crabs aim their shears already? Shoot away, Merbill!" he cried to the Creole, who was trembling and hissing with rage, jumping to the right and

left, so that neither Richards nor myself could approach him.

"So you, *Monshur Tonson*, want my bride?" he cried, still jumping with the Creole, who was almost fainting with fury, and shaking him so hard, that he was unable to shoot the second pistol at him. "So shoot, here is my breast! stand back, Howard—hold! I do n't do anything to him—this shadow of a man, who would forestall—the grave! Crapaud, Tonson! how long have you to live? Go home! go to sleep, and look to your house; but leave me and Julia untouched. I have conquered her, and I'll keep her, and defend her against you and anybody! That I will do against one thousand such Tonsons as you are! And now go!" he cried, pushing him at once to the ground, so that the poor fellow's knees almost broke—"now go, and do n't let me see you again—it might be very bad for you."

"Go, Merveille! go, leave him; and do n't provoke him any more, or a misfortune will come."

"Satisfaction! satisfaction I will have!" shrieked Merveille.

"That you've got; the blood runs from the shoulder of your adversary; do you want more, he will give it to you."

Menou had been benumbed by this Kentuckian exhibition, and unable to utter a single word. Charles came galloping back—he had not been able to reach the steamboat. My guests were standing astonished—the negroes used their eyes and mouths; the only words heard were, "Massa Kentucky, debil be! Massa Toffy, the bery debil!" The comedy had sent all out of their senses. Menou himself stared around. We were what we call completely bullied.

"Come and have your wound dressed, and then to breakfast."

"I'm only scratched—I wish it had gone deeper, I might then have shown Julia that I willingly shed my blood for her. But to your breakfast, no, I won't go; not a mouthful, before I know how I'm off; and until my father-in-law and yours shakes my hand, and takes back the word infamous."

"Papa," I begged, "it is on you now; have the kindness—it was a hard word."

The papa turned off.

"Papa," I begged; "I pray you."

"He may come to breakfast," said Menou.

"Tell him so yourself."

"I can and I won't."

"Doughby," I spoke, "it is your turn to

give first the hand for reconciliation—you first offended Mr. Menou."

"That's true," said Doughby, "and I willingly ask his pardon, if only he draws back that word infamous. Papa," he continued, "pardon me, I am a Hotspur, it is true; but pardon me, and take back that word infamous."

"Come to breakfast," said Menou.

"Not before you pardon me and draw back that word. I could not come before the eyes of my fellow citizens."

"I cannot take it back before I know——" said Menou.

"Pardon him," I begged pressingly; "he is a Hotspur, but his heart sits in the right place; a real satan when he is provoked, but not without a noble soul. Our family has not been dishonored."

"Pardon him," said Emily, to my utmost joy; "I entreat you for him."

"I also," said Mrs. Houston; "I join my prayers with those of your friends, and have the honor to assure you that Mr. Ralph Doughby really stood in near circumstances to Miss Emily Warren, who, as Mr. Menou may know, is of a distinguished family—her father, the honorable Mr. Warren, being a member of Congress, and her grandfather, on the mother's side, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence; also——"

"And," interrupted Richards, "as Demoiselle Julia returned immediately upon the steamboat, the behavior of Major Doughby shows such delicacy, that it is worthy to be remarked, Mr. Menou."

Menou had bent his eyes to the ground. At once he stared at Richards.

"Ah, if that should be," he muttered.

"Be assured," interrupted Mr. Houston, "that Major Doughby acted in every respect toward you and your daughter as a man of honor. He has been my neighbor for eight years, and none of our respectable families would refuse his company."

"Doughby," I whispered into the ears of the hair-brained fellow; "now is the time. You insulted my father-in-law in a most unaccountable way; insulted me and my guests; but all shall be pardoned, if you go now and crave papa's pardon."

"Who insulted Mr. Menou? Who insulted your guests?" cried Doughby. I thought the devil had again come into him, but it only was the laughing devil. "I should wish to see him!" he cried, laughing. "Would—would see him who insulted Mr. Menou, my most amiable, sweet, most excellent papa—always presupposing that he draws back that cursed

infamous charge? I would give him a blow on the head, like an opossum, that he should forget insulting for all his life-time. Dearest papa! I should not have offended you!" he turned with a piny, tender voice to Menou. "Upon my soul! I don't know a word of it—I didn't want to offend you; I only wanted my dear little doll, Julia. I wanted a wife. I have seen many girls. I went last year expressly for that purpose, to New-York, Saratoga and Ballston, but I didn't like any one so well. Julia I loved from the first sight—I was raving for her. It was tearing my heart when I heard that she was to have Merbill. Now I took hold; I had the good luck to please her. I am a merry Kentuckian, who would not offend a child, and whose flames are not extinguished, even by the chilly Mississippi air, although I hope Julia will do it. Dearest papa, you will pardon me that I was so rash. You will pardon me, and take back that infamous word? Dearest, sweetest, golden, loveliest papa!"

And saying so, he took the papa into his arms, and flattered, and pressed him, and begged very touchingly.

"Go! Well, go; you crazy fellow," said Menou, half-laughing and half-angry. "You are a real bear—a savage."

"I a savage!" cried Doughby. "I a savage! Now you ought first to see Old Hickory, or Colonel Benton, who is now in Missouri—then you would call them savages. I am as tame as a duck. On my hands I will carry you. But, dearest papa, withdraw that infamy from me!"

"Well; I take it back," said Menou.

"And you pardon the crazy Ralph?" he begged, taking and caressing Menou's hands.

"We'll see—if he behaves well?"

"Halloo! Papa Menou pardons! A hurrah for Papa Menou—hurrah! hurrah!"

And now he made some jumps, that drove the ladies from him on every side. Then he again took papa on his arm, as if he was a two-year-old child, and cried: "Papa has pardoned me!" and danced around with him—then, he ran as quickly as he could, with papa on his arm, during the loud and merry laughter of all, to the house, up the piazza, into the saloon, where he sat him easily in his chair.

There was something so gay, wild, natural in the man, that it was impossible to continue angry with him, although we had been so at first. When we joined them, he had one of Menou's hands in his terrible

paw, and with the other he wiped the face of the father, covered with sweat and blood.

"But, Doughby, you soil papa and all of us, with your blood!"

"Upon my soul, that's true! but it is good blood, honest blood!" said Doughby, jumping up, and running to the looking-glass to see his wound. "Only a scratch—did not go a quarter of an inch deep into the flesh; but I must ask you to give me another room, that I may change my dress."

"Come, Major Doughby," said Menou in a friendly way, "your wound must be dressed—come, I'll do it for you."

"Thank you, papa, thank you; come papa; from your hands I accept all. You cure the pains—pains of body and soul. Come!"

The sight of his blood seemed to have at once changed Menou's disposition toward Doughby. He took him by the hand, and led him from the saloon into his own chamber—called Charles and old Sibyl, and began to dress the wound.

We sat, highly pleased with the agreeable termination of the horrible storm. At once the door opened, and Doughby, in my father-in-law's morning-gown, cried out: "Halloo! a Catholic priest! a Catholic priest! a thousand dollars for a Catholic priest! Halloo, nigger! get a Catholic priest!" he cried, running toward the saloon-door. "Here, you niggers? there is something for you to drink a stiff grog!"

"God bless massa! bless Massa Debil! Kentucky massa!" roared the niggers, beginning already to fight about the silver coin thrown out to them.

"But, for Heaven's sake! hold your tongue," begged Menou. "You will get a wound-fever; and we have a woman with twins in the house."

"A wound-fever, papa, of such a trifle? and now, after it is dressed? I have ere now received wounds—once from a tomahawk, that cut just on this same place; but I pickled the Indian for it, papa—but how is it now about the Catholic priest?"

"He will soon come—only hold your tongue, and keep quiet for the poor mother's sake."

"Hurrah for the woman and her twins! hurrah for all! Give her this bank note, Howard! Give it to her, give it to her. All shall be merry to-day! Papa Menou has pardoned me! I am, indeed, the best soul—only all must go by impulse. I'll carry my Julia on my hands, and all shall carry her on their hands. I'll snap the head off every one, who shows her an unpleasant face, just like a snapping-

turtle. I'll be shot, if I don't carry her on my hands, by jingo! I will. Try and be merry! Papa Menou has pardoned me!"

"Doughby, do n't you hear? we have got a confined negress, with twins; you shall hold your tongue."

"I will, yes, I will—I will keep my mouth. Halloo, Howard! dear Howard, only a glass—a single glass of toddy—but do n't let it be too small. My throat burns; I am so dry, just like our prairies after a forest-fire."

"Beware!" cried Menou. "Sibyl, fetch the *tisane*, of which I told you."

"What is a *tisane*?" inquired Doughby in a funny manner.

"A cup of coffee will do better, Doughby. Phoebe, a cup of coffee!"

"Perhaps the *tisane* might be better; there is, perhaps, a dose of rum or Monongahela in it—ain't it so, papa?" said Doughby.

And papa laughed as if he would burst.

"Upon honor, I did neither eat nor drink since yesterday noon; I do n't believe that two glasses came over my lips. I am hungry and thirsty indeed."

And speaking in this manner, tranquillity was restored, and we enjoyed repose after the storm which had passed over us, like a hurricane that blows over the Mississippi valley.

Two hours afterward, all was in order again. Papa Menou had pardoned Doughby, and formally given his sanction to the marriage. After to-morrow, it is to be celebrated by the reverend Padre Hilaire, in conformity with the rites of the Catholic church. Louise has, in short, written to her sister an account of the happy close of the storm. Charles, Richards, and I, are on a tour through the plantation. Doughby stays on the sofa by the earnest orders of Menou, who seems to like him pretty well already. He speaks to him and Vergennes French, and Menou is almost bursting with laughter. Merveille has been brought back from his murderous thoughts by Menou and Vergennes. To-morrow, we all go up to Menou's plantation to witness the close of the drama.

When I reviewed with Louise, behind the mosquito nets, the affairs of the day in order, I remarked, that we might not be able to attend the celebration of Doughby's marriage to-morrow, as our household had just been increased, and we had to become acquainted, as quickly as possible, with our new negroes. I remarked, that Charles would certainly have the kindness to stay a few days on the plantation, but she whispered into my ear, that Charles had told

her he should very much like to go up; he would soon return, but on this occasion wished to go.

"And why should he not? he has done me so many favors, that it would be unkind to urge any more claims upon his kindness."

"There is some hidden meaning in it, also," remarked Clara, laughing. "Did n't you remark anything?"

"Nothing," was the answer.

"Oh! how blind men are. Just look at him closer to-morrow."

"What is it?"

"His hour, too, has arrived."

"How?—Miss Warren?"

Louise laughed.

"Now, that's really astonishing!—blow after blow! they kindle like spunk. But it is no wonder, in our voluptuous life. The juice goes, like fresh wine; and in this patriarchal loneliness, this distance from all the impulses of the spoiled outer world, how should the appearance of such a magnificent girl as Emily, not work like electricity?"

"So you really think that Emily, if she were not so stiff——"

"This stiffness will pass, as soon as she gets the right man. Emily is indeed a capital girl—certainly no Louise."

"Silence, flatterer!"

And it was right—just as Louise had remarked. Charles pays more attention to his dress than he ever did before. He might be taken, instead of Doughby, for the bridegroom. The latter must still walk around in the morning-gown: to-morrow Menou will permit him to put on his major's uniform. It is a pleasure to observe Charles and Emily. I only regret that I have no time for it. He is sometimes timid, sometimes bold, like a Frenchman. And the spirits of the young lady have returned; her step is again half-dancing, half-floating; the glance of true happiness blushes in her sweet countenance. Ay, the Yankee girl is wise: she knows that old Menou weighs a million of dollars.

Heaven be praised that the catastrophe did not break out earlier, for then my plantation might have gone to ruin; but now, it is really in astonishing order. Even the days' works, the pensions, as we call them, are already divided to all the negroes until the beginning of next month, when the cotton crop is to commence. Every one has worked according to his strength. From his books, I observe that he punished only twice, and in these cases a girl and a boy, who had almost killed a horse during

a nightly excursion. Doughby knows of an overseer, who came down from Tennessee, and who, he says, is an excellent young man. The negro feast and the distribution of presents, will be put off, by the advice of Menou. This delay shall accustom my new subjects to the domestic order. The fear of being omitted at the distribution of the presents, has a better effect on them, in all cases, than ten whips. I believe the advice is good, since I cannot expect the overseer before a week, and I hate beating and whipping.

Heaven be praised! they are gone at last. My heart feels easier; the noise and bustle were really too much. At four o'clock they went on board, and with them the thirty negroes, whom papa brought down to have the house and the plantation sooner put in order. The two cannons are gone also. I permitted Louise to go too; but my little consort leaned her head on my breast, and thought it was not decent to travel alone through the world, and she hoped that the good example which she showed would not be lost on me. It shall not, dear Louise. Merveille stays with us; and Vergennes will come as soon as the marriage of the new friend of his heart, Ralph, has been celebrated. I wish he would go, and that Vergennes had stayed. I can't bear the roué—his appearance already disgusts me.

The sacred, indissoluble knot is tied—Doughby is a happy husband, and Julia is a trembling, abashed wife. They have just entered my house. They are on their way home, and have just come for a moment, with their friends and mine to bid me a long farewell. All are in the best humor, all are affected—with the exception of Aunt Duras and old Merveille. Well, it is impossible to please all!

Doughby appeared strikingly changed to me; he seemed to be twenty times more reasonable, and fully satisfied with his new destination.

"Howard!" he whispered among other things into my ear, "my wife is an angel; but you know, dear Howard, how cruel it is to take her away from the Creole neighborhood—away from the Catholic priests and mamma."

"I believe you are right, Doughby."

"And now, Howard—friend, brother, brother-in-law, a thousand thanks for all. You acted like a true Virginian—not too much, and not too little. You let things take their course, and only helped along here and there. I'll be shot if I ever forget that! And if you ever hear that I caused a single disagreeable hour to Julia—that I

did not fulfil each of her wishes, you may hang me on the first tree. I'll send you the overseer, who is of a good family, and then you will come and visit us. But not yet, we must first put the house in order."

Menou threatened with his finger.

"What is it, papa? You gave testimony as to the age of Julia—that I'll never forget!" he laughed, and went on board.

"And how is it with Charles, dear papa?"

"He stays with his sister some weeks."

"And Miss Emily?"

"Well, we'll see: about Christmas, Charles will have closed his twenty-first year. God bless you, dear children."

We briefly bade Madame de Duras farewell, who, as we said before, was not in good spirits. Mrs. Houston, Richards, in short, all of our friends.

Merveille is going up to Mamma Menou's. Happy voyage! Thus closes the drama of the courtship of Ralph Doughby Esq., according to rule, with an *exceunt omnes*.

END OF PART THE SECOND.

PART THIRD.

THE LIFE OF A PLANTER.

CHAPTER I.

SUNDAY.

MENOU, my father-in-law, and the neighbors surprised us last Sunday ; and Taby, methinks, is meditating something equally abrupt and pleasant. In a few days she will be able to leave her sick-chamber, and to resume her station as the attentive hostess. All is bustle and vivacity. The preparations for a dancing tea-party are rather extensive. Twenty stakes, each surrounded by a pile of pine laths, stand at the entrance of the camp. Sybil, always a leading spirit, has been waddling about for the last hour, engaged in the preparations. She bows to the right and left, shouting to me, "Maum know all 'bout it, massa ! maum allow it, massa !" Maum (that is, Mrs. Howard,) is the only received authority on the occasion ; everyone refers to her ; her name is in their hearts and on their lips ; in short, she is prime minister, parliament, all in all. I, as sovereign, am a mere appendix, and must content myself with my sinecure. Well, maum has contributed two bottles of wine for the colored ladies, as the apes call themselves, half-a-dozen salted fish, together with a ham and some apple-pies, prepared by the brown hands of Phillis, the chambermaid. The last-mentioned delicacy was deemed indispensable, by the coffee-colored nymphs : "injustice to the honor of the house ; what would the neighbors say, without a pie ?" All the other requisites have been export-

ed, or imported, by Hannibal, Taby's inferior half. Four hens and a rooster are roasting on the spit ; while cakes and confectionary are everywhere scattered about. It is no very difficult task to divine whence these delicacies have come. Liberty and property, are indeed the symbols of our faith ; but it appears to me that the negroes leave all the faith to us, and appropriate the works to themselves, just as Old England's gentry treat the people, or "the swinish multitude," as they love to call them. A truly wonderful animal is man ; and a truly wonderful member is his tongue. How long will it be ere the world learns to distinguish between mere appearance and actual existence ? When I first read the high-sounding phraseology in which British liberty has been extolled, you cannot imagine the ardent enthusiasm with which I desired to see its working. I have seen it. This same liberty seemed, in my opinion, very strikingly to resemble our morasses, covered with Nelumbo flowers : so beautiful, that you plant your foot with perfect confidence, but so treacherous, that you have no sooner touched the surface than you become the prey of alligators and snapping-turtles. Liberty ! "Oh ! ye powers that be !" Liberty ! I can well remember many specimens of this liberty, and of the spirited construction in which it is understood by John Bull. On one occasion, while passing Knight's-Bridge on horseback, between Hyde-Park and Tattersall's, near Bartholomew Hospital, the

reins of my mare were suddenly checked by the officious hands of one of those old heroes of Aboukir, Trafalgar, and Waterloo, who surround the hospitals by hundreds, and seize upon travellers, like a pack of hounds, all for the single shilling. A conflict would have been the consequence, had the six individuals counted more than seven arms. I left the reins to two, but four seized upon them, and held with as much tenacity, as John Bull holds a shilling. Becoming wearied of the beauties of the English horse-world, I prepared to redeem my mare from the hands of the officious beings who had the charge of her. This could only be achieved by paying a tax of four sixpences, in consideration of which, I was enriched with the history, in extenso, of the four heroes. Two had been pressed into the navy, and two enticed into the army. The pity which I manifested in their behalf was badly paid.

"By Jove! did not I tell ye, if he been't a Yankee!" cried the residents of Greenwich and Chelsea, in a breath. "A hurrah, sir! for old England, and her liberty and prosperity!"

A cannon-ball had deprived one of them of a leg, another of an arm; yet all, by way of remuneration for the sixpences, cried liberty!—the equivalent for their maimed arms and legs!

In this respect our negroes are more enlightened, I assure you! Would that the members of some of our numerous African societies could see the misery in which these people live, and the horrors by which they are overwhelmed.

Taby receives her guests—judging from the perfume streaming from the apartment, a dozen must have arrived. She is seated on the sofa, clad in a new calico frock, a present from Mrs. Howard—a present, made to-day, and enhanced by a pair of stockings, shoes, a silk cravat, and two dollars from me; one hand holds a reticule, the other a fan of peacock-feathers.

Among the guests, we behold several colored gentlemen from the neighboring plantations—at least ten miles distant—all in full dress. The ladies—any other term would be sacrilege—in calico, even silk dresses, bearing on their gloved-arms Florence shawls, on their woolly heads silk turbans; their beaux in blue, yellow, green and white frock-coats and jackets; and red, blue, and green-striped pantaloons; shoes and stockings, watch-ribbons and chains; and, as I live, two of the gentlemen carry lorgnons, or rather penny watch-glasses, equally good for actual service. They have spied the new

fashion in Vergennes and Merveille, and are anxious to be *every-bit gentlemen*. Fabius and Lilly enter. The fellow in his pantaloons of striped calico, and dress-coat of yellow nankeen, would present a respectable appearance, had nature provided him, instead of those duck-like feet, with a human foundation. He waddles along like the webbed species; but he is, nevertheless, aware of his own importance, and that of the day. Proudly he enters, with Lilly on his arm, of course, and begs to assure Lady Taby of his delight at her restoration, and the opportunity of paying his respects to so amiable a lady. Lady Taby rising, and with a courtesy, is no less delighted at seeing a "*gentleman of so berry good manners*."

Queer creatures, these blacks! Every feature and motion aped, and aped in the most fantastic style. Their aping often produces angry looks, hatred and punishment. Our white population, of a certain grade, abhor it; and even more enlightened individuals behold in it gloomy forebodings. But there is no help for it! Once for all, the negro renounces his color, and be his body ever so black, in his manners he strives to be white. All his thoughts and desires are the reverse of those of the Indian, who would remain what he is—an Indian. Contemplating their odious, affected manners, a stoic might be unable to refrain from anger, and be led strongly to treat them as a troop of clothed ourang-outangs.

Vitell, with Dinah, enters next. Vitell is the son of an aged African, gifted with plough-shares, in lieu of feet, and endowed with calves like three-pound cannon-balls, not in the rear, but in front of his shanks, with lips like moderate sausages, and extended from ear to ear,—but a set of teeth, white and sharp; a flat nose and deep eyes. He sports a nankeen jacket, *à la Creole*, striped pantaloons, and a huge breast-pin in his bosom.

On entering, he raps his calves with his cane, expands his mouth from ear to ear, and ejaculates: "Mr. Vitell take de liberty to present to Lady Taby, Mrs. Dinah and Mr. Vitell." Then he breaks out into a loud burst of joy.

"Mr. Vitell, highly welcome," softly whispers Taby, again rising and curtsying.

"Dear picaninny well, maum?" turning to Dinah.

"Berry well, maum. Tank'e, maum," replied Mrs. Dinah, continually turning like a hen, and curtsying. "Picaninny

berry well, but dis forenoon not berry orderly!"

"What! little gemman not orderly? fy! for shame!" cries Taby. "Little gemman generally berry orderly."

"Yes, maum!" answers Dinah, with all possible affectation; "else he be intire gemman and berry orderly, but I him tell to-day, 'Viti, Viti, to-day not play wid Sulla,' (Sulla, and his companion Marius, are two Newfoundland dogs, with skins tarred like Scotch rams.) Him say 'yis maum.' I dress him in de new pants, and him, in half a hour, wid Marius in de mud! Me him say, 'Viti be no gemman.' Him say, 'ole fool, maum! Viti not play wid Sulla—Viti wid Marius.'"

"Oh! him be a dear little angel," replied Taby. I could not resist a laugh.

Thus they are, old and young. Yesterday morning, on finding the gate of a corn-crib open, belonging to Vitell's department, I ordered him to close it. He did so, and at noon he crept, with no little trouble, through the window, and returned with his corn by the same route. As might be expected, the window remained open, and consequently chickens and turkeys soon made a triumphant entrance. On my afterward remonstrating with him, on the uselessness of closing the door and not the window also, he was utterly amazed, stared at me, and closed the window. But now comes the difficulty. Night sets in, corn must be had. 'How, maum, come to corn? Massa ordered me keep shut door and window.' The difficulty being solved, he appears like one fallen from the clouds, strikes his head, and screams: "Oh, maum, maum—God bless maum! Hang dem turkeys, maum!"

But to return to our tea-party. Marion enters next—an African of fifty, of the tribe Kaway, who, notwithstanding his residence of over thirty years in Louisiana, cannot pronounce correctly ten words of English or French. And how could he have acquired it, with his enormous lips, through which every utterance must pass as through a surf? His nose resembles a flatly pressed, unripe fig—even the blueish hue not excepted. But behold the condescension with which Congo Ebony is received by the fashionable circle!

The British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs could not assume a higher degree of insolence, when in the presence of a plenipotentiary of the fourth degree. Even here, we have several distinct, or shall I say, aristocratic grades? From the uncouth African, with the animal profile of the wild man, we ascend to the Creole ne-

gro, and farther, to the idle, but cunning female mulatto, who, *ceteris paribus*, prides herself on her fraction of white blood, no less than your viscountess does on hers which has flowed through twenty generations. What a rich harvest would the student of psychology and physiology reap from a fifty years' study of these beings!

The conversation becomes lively. Cæsar and Prona approach. War will ensue with Pompey, Prona being his wife—but he loses his time, like his namesake. He has declared his intention to attend the meeting of the Rev. Roebuck, which is being held some five miles distant. Prona, however, appears not to be inconsolable. She has the figure of Hebe, and, clad in a black taglioni, has turned the heads of a dozen men, and been guilty of the crime of adultery not less than three times in the course of four weeks; in consequence of which, she has been expelled by Mrs. Howard from her residence, and degraded to field-labor, with the threat of being sold to the sugar plantation of Merveille. On the reception of this intelligence, she writhed like a worm, the consequence whereof time alone can tell. She is evidently irritated. Lady Tiber, whose lord handles the fiddle, has openly avowed the impropriety of her husband's calling forth the harmony of the chords of his instrument in presence of this woman. That certainly is barbarous, cruel! She seems to be devotedly fond of music: not one of those hard-hearing, malicious souls, as Shakspeare calls them, in whom dwells no harmony. On the contrary, she is too enthusiastic; so much so, that she threatens her enemies with the vengeance of those terrible rivals, Cæsar and Pompey. All these police reports reach me through Mrs. Howard, a true Fouché in *petticoats*, who meddles in everything. She is omniscient, and investigates all particulars. She stands in the same position toward her negro family, as the priests, their fourteen thousand saints, stand with the Roman Catholics. She feels chiefly interested in the love-scrapes of her black breeding subjects. This is all in order, but not absolutely necessary. The inspector, promised me by Doughby, has not appeared; and to control the number of fifty black—devils I will not call them, but surely angels they are not—is no easy matter. They are never to be trusted completely—treat them as ill, or as well as you will:—a gloomy trait in the negro character!

Cæsar had not terminated his bows to the right and left, to affirm his gratification at

beholding Lady Taby when Prona, exclaimed:

"Oh maum, you not believe the importance of certain people, since dey live in a new log-house."

Cæsar inhabits one of the new log-houses, and has advanced to the station of foreman over the field-slaves, and ox-driver *pro tem*.

"Yes maum!" said Cæsar, complaisantly eyeing his yellow inexpressibles, throwing back his head, and then patting his calves with his cane.

"Yes maum!" he repeated with much importance.

"Maum, she berry bad manners," advanced Prona.

This is a common phrase among negroes, to express something very abominable. Thus it is applied to a plough, a cow, an axe, etc., etc., etc.

"Oh, she horrible manners!" confirmed Cæsar.

"Oh, maum, maum! see her dance! oh, maum! maum!" shrieked Prona, breaking out in a fit of laughter, to which all respond. Oh! what laughter! Laugh, ye black souls! Contemplating you with your black and white virtues and vices, how merrily you seize upon the bright side of life, driving all dull care away! I ask myself—Who, then, is truly free? Myself, the master, or these, my slaves?

The counterpart you may see on the other side of the farm-house; two white subjects, a carpenter and cabinet-maker, the only whites at present employed on the plantation. The want of hilarity here, balances the surplus among the negroes. Tedious beings! hardly ten words in an entire afternoon. The one a native of Plymouth, in England, with light-blue eyes and a long profile, pronouncing *was* for *was*, and successfully introducing, in cockney fashion, an *h*, where we think it superfluous, and *vice versa*. He spells from a book which has lost its cover, gapes regularly once every thirty seconds, during which performance he marks the place in his book with his finger, probably to facilitate him in finding the place at which he was interrupted.

No change of sound in his recitals; the book appears to be without periods and commas. Marks of interrogation and exclamation, there are none. Monotonous and tedious, he draws forth word after word, as it were from a well; or, as our old Creole women pronounce the Lord's prayer in the cathedral.* One loses all pa-

tience! Let us see the precious effusion about to nourish this British brain.

I approach and hear the following:

"I feel a thousand mortal things about me but nothing godlike unless it may be the thing which you condemn a disposition to love and to be merciful to pardon the follies of my species and that's human to be indulgent to my own Sal alas the doom of Nineveh is sealed wo wo to the unrivalled city Sar what dost thou dread Sal thou art guarded by thy foes in a few hours the tempest may break out which overwhelms thee and thine and mine and in another day what is shall be the past of Belus race Sar what must we dread Sal ambitious treachery which has environed thee with snares but yet there is resource empower me with thy signet to quell," &c.*

"What the devil can this be?" thought I, looking over the shoulder of the reader. "Manes of Byron! if you are permitted to look down on this adorer of your earthly muse—boundless must be your joy!"

"You read a fine book, Mr. Wright! only, I see the title is wanting."

"Yes 'tis, Mr. Oward," responded the carpenter, with a corresponding nod of his head. "Hand a pity too! 'T is a beautiful and a hedifying book, and treats of prophet Jonah and Niniveh—you know Niniveh, where prophet Jonah preached. You must know, I purchased the book, together with some other volumes, of the cabin boy of the Martha Glencairn, for a bottle of rum. He preferred the rum and I the books. Take great pleasure in conversing with books, Mr. Oward, on Sunday hespecially; during the week 't would be a loss of time."

At this stage of the conversation, the man pointed to a box at his feet, containing, together with his shaving apparatus, blacking brushes, and other utensils, his library! the *Twin Sisters*, *Adventures of Dick Turpin*, *The Enchanted Castle*, *Life of a Flea*, and other classical works of that species, very diverting in his important opinion; but for to-day, it being Sunday, his taste required something more "hedifying."

To my question, whether he had yet found Jonah, he replied in the negative, but hoped yet to have that pleasure. Nimrod, and Nineveh, and Baal, had often met his eye, yet the whole was not quite clear to him; besides many words and names appeared to him not fully biblical.

All is dealt out by this man, as formally

* At New-Orleans.

* Tragedy of "Sardanapalus," Act. I., Sc. 2.

and positively as the postmaster hands you your letters; dare not smile, while you listen. As he proceeds, he continues further to spell in the 1st. Act of Sardanapalus.

Exactly fifteen steps from him, broods the cabinet-maker, his feet, *al pari*, his nose pressed against the fence, over a copy of the *Daily Journal*. No verdant oasis can have brightened the life of this young man—all is a barren desert. You might take him for a coarse imitation of Don Quixote. Thanks to gin, tobacco, and vice, for the ashy hue spread over his countenance, the common mark of extinct passions. Extinct passions, merciful Heaven! The young man, twenty-three years of age, landed here a few days since, offering his services as a carpenter or cabinet-maker. Being informed of the want of such a person on the plantation, he remained and introduced himself to me, on my return from the fields; during this complimentary process, his left hand rested in his breeches-pocket, the right supported a roll of twist, from which he supplied himself, while he eyed me, at his ease, from head to foot—retaining his variegated high-crowned beaver on his head. His clothing consisted of a black dress-coat, probably on his back night and day for four weeks before; pantaloons of the same color, dirty stockings, and shoes down at the heels. Under his arm he held a package, with cigars and newspapers, both forming, doubtless, his chief bodily and mental sustenance—in a word, an image of horrible apathy. I considered him one of those appendages to our courts of justice, in the southeast styled blood-suckers; but I found my error, on being informed by him that he was a gentleman, desirous of making a temporary arrangement with me as carpenter and cabinet-maker, in consideration of the lawful equivalent. I was now aware, that in him I beheld one of those worthys, a pupil of that new democratic school, which might certainly reconcile us to the curse of slavery, if anything could. I had heard and seen at the north many of the movements of these men, and thus considered it worth my while to make the acquaintance of a branch of this far-spreading tree of poison. To my question, regarding that lawful equivalent, he replied, after having duly emitted a ray of coffee-colored juice from his toothless mouth; that he considered as such—\$1.50 per day, with genteel board and lodging, “such as a citizen and gentleman required.”

I ordered Mr. Wright to employ him on trial, and to grant such compensation as his services on the first day might de-

serve. After the lapse of twenty-four hours, he entered the gallery, the beaver on his right ear as usual, his left hand in his pocket; and Mrs. Howard and myself being present, he assumed a position common to our western Creoles, on reviewing their passing flocks. Previous to addressing me, he again ejected some juice over the matting, at the sight of which Louise, by the way, was much disgusted. Then he informed me, in true Pennsylvania laconic style, of his doubts as to our suiting each other long, since he suspected people here of being ignorant of the treatment of gentlemen, as cabinet-makers and carpenters. Moreover, the citizen and gentleman, on giving his labor, in nowise renounced his claims to genteel treatment. He considered it not genteel, to place his meals—the meals of a gentleman foreigner on a mean board, while Mrs. Howard and I dined in the saloon. At the north, viz. Pennsylvania and Ohio, people have better manners—there the gentlemen journeymen sit at table, attended by the lady and gentleman of the house.

“Do you hear, dear Louise, how enlightened and genteel the people are in Pennsylvania!” I cried laughing, while I told the mechanic he must either be satisfied or leave. Again he ejected juice, but remained.

And whoever could have seen him, night and day with his hat on his head, as the kings of old wore their crowns, would have regarded him as one of those tribunes, elected to divide my property on the principles of the Agrarian law, among a dozen carpenters, shoemakers, and tailors. Biting sarcasm played round the corners of his mouth, tainted by tobacco, and signifying as much as: “Wait, wait; our time will come!” Louise became impatient and irritated, on my not discharging him instantly.

“But, Louise, we have thousands of his kind at the north. New-York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, are crowded, we may almost say, governed by them. They decide the elections; their tools occupy the seats in the Assemblies and in Congress. They have their officers, presidents, secretaries, and agents—a perfect organization, and newspapers for the purpose of agitating the mob, and of bringing their plans to maturity. These plans, although monstrous, are not new. They desire the Agrarian law of the plebeians of ancient Rome, but remodelled in true democratic style. They desire, not only to take the surplus, and add it where they think fit, but also to make this enviable state of the *juste-milieu*,

lasting. To destroy and forbid the monopoly of talent and knowledge, they condemn universities and academies, as being alone accessible to the rich; hot-beds of vain speculations, mines of aristocratic opinions and preponderating ideas, at variance with the democratic principle. Mediocrity is their motto; by it, alone, this precious principle can be retained in its purity.

Thus they speak, preach and teach—a single one of their fifty newspapers bearing testimony. Oh! Democracy! a precious thing art thou on paper, but I doubt whether thy great apostle* would be still the same zealot in 1828, as he was in 1801. Terrible are the effects of these cancers! terrible this kind of democratic government! The former order of things which was the support of our laws, the entire formation of our civil code, it cannot be denied, received its tone and its tendency from Old England. Our respect for the law, the main rampart of our social order, is mostly an inheritance from the time when England ruled us with a strong hand, by which she controlled the passions of the people, and maintained that authority, which she has understood how to preserve for her great national names. Transmitted to us, it gave also to our ship of state that direction, which was long felt after the helmsman had left his post. The gallant ship pursues her course, even after the helm is abandoned. But the tackle begins to slacken, the ropes give way, the authority of great historical men has vanished. Our shoemakers and tailors speak of Washington and Franklin, as of their apprentices; and every whipster believes himself capable of rearing a better fabric of a state. Gloomy symptoms of basely corrupted vigor!

Observe this man of the new school; he hands me the newspaper with a triumphant smile, which is quickly turned to a malicious one, on my discharging him. Tossing his head on his left shoulder, taking a fresh bite of his twist—after having ejected a quantity of juice at my feet, he requires of me the loan of a coat, a shirt, and a pair of inexpressibles; since his own needed repairs, but might remain in my hands as security.

I was undecided, whether to laugh or be irritated. In my flighty bachelor life, I believed I knew the world, because I had, with a careless eye, gazed on the variegated hue of its outward appearance; but I see my error. During the four weeks of

my married life, I have learnt more of the discomforts of our social system, than in the whole twenty-seven and three-quarter years of my previous life. I turned from the man in disgust.

In the meantime the sun had lowered; the silver moon sparkled through the magnolia crowns on the opposite shore; short stanzas on the piano sounded through the blinds; Louise moved in the sphere of harmony for the second time since our marriage. The keys of the housewife had on her the usual effect of lessening, if not the pleasure, at least the practice of music. Groups of negroes surrounded the house, probably to listen to the strains, in which they take such delight; so, in a short time, Pompey entered the saloon, gritting his teeth, and asking maum for the performance of a sacred song. The request being granted, Pompey was nearly beside himself with joy. But the murmur is too loud, it sounds like revolt; all eyes are turned to the window, and none to me. On approaching the piazza, I heard the following remarks addressed by Crassus senior, to ditto junior:

"You rascal, you be Jackson man? you a fine Jackson man! you disgrace of de family! you get nine lash. You be good for notin' rascal!"

"What is that? Have these woful politics also entered the heads of my negroes! They occupy ourselves enough!"

Now Tiber and Vitell turn and twitch near me, both opening their mouths to the widest extent, rolling their eyes so terribly, that the white of them is alone visible, and gasping for breath. At last Vitell breaks forth:

"Massa! massa! God bless massa!"

I looked earnestly at Vitell, without moving a muscle. Slaves are children, who watch the slightest change of your features, and after they have once ascertained your weak side, know how to master you, though you be a sovereign.

"Oh! massa! massa!" interrupted Tiber.

I still remained silent. A breathless stillness rested amid the group.

"Oh! massa! massa!" again exclaimed Vitell; "maum."

It was only now, that I conceived it in accordance with my patriarchal dignity to speak, and accordingly I said:

"What of maum?"

"Oh! maum! maum! God bless maum!" cried both negroes.

"God bless maum!" responded the whole number in chorus.

"Oh! massa! maum permit! Oh!

* Jefferson.

massa! maum permit bit dancing!" commenced Vitell.

I became more dignified.

"But, Vitell! what will the neighbors say? you had your feast but three weeks since, and the afterfeast a week later."

"To-day after-afterfeast have," exultingly cried Vitell; "massa! after-afterfeast."

"What will the neighbors say? we have to gather in the cotton crops."

"Who care for de neighbors or de cotton crops?" cried Vitell and Tiber.

Again I was silent, and approached the piazza with a grave step, to hear the voice of my parliament and prime minister. In breathless silence, the result of the discussion was expected. Louise, always anxious to see the negroes happy, moves to allow them the pleasure, since, she says, her papa never objected to it, alleging that amusement was more advantageous to them than dull monotony; besides, it costs but a few gallons of rum, a couple of hams, and salted fish. The motion being carried, the queen announces her sanction, and joy fills the air. The greatest hilarity instantly ensues—fanciful dances, screams, howlings, and songs. All act as if they were crazy—men, women, and children. Fifteen minutes have hardly elapsed, and the entire camp presents the scene of a vast conflagration. A pine torch blazes from each of the stakes: these twenty chandeliers cast a vivid reflection on the black forms, who, as it now appears, have made ample preparations for their after-afterfeast. Banners appear, as at the chief feast, but this time of political colors, white and blue. Each banner, consisting of a sheet of white or blue paper, presents almost as warlike an appearance as our militia colors. Caps of paper deck their heads. Altogether, a dozen militia regiments preparing for muster, could present no livelier spectacle. They have formed two divisions, one with blue and gold helmets of paper, and banners of the same color and material; each division containing ten banners, placed as true to a straight line as the ranks of our militia. They might be considered as two regiments in marching order—all but their color—each consisting of thirty men, including ten standard-bearers, fifteen officers, three privates, and two musicians. The latter are Tiber and Gracchus—Tiber with his fiddle, Gracchus with his triangle. As regards the music, the Jackson party evidently has the advantage, since the Adamites have only a triangle and two cow-bells. But no matter. Men, women, and children

proudly range themselves around the banners and cow-bells, and lift their feet so dextrously, that the head-drummer of a regiment of English grenadiers would appear as a block of wood compared to them.

Tiber gives with his violin the signal for thirty voices, to the following strain:

"Hurrah, Jackson he a great man—ho, ho, ho!
Beat dem British blows—lo, lo, lo!
Jackson says, black man for eber.
Johnny president be nebber."

On they march, toward the dancing-place. They are succeeded by the Adams party, decked with untarnished white, evidently inferior in appearance to the blues. Blue is blue, even if gold be with it!

Psyche, the chambermaid of Louise, of the Jackson party, triumphantly addresses maum, who is just guiding a slice of a fried fowl to her mouth:

"Maum! dear maum! but see Adams party! Only white rags on dem heads! And de banners! bits of dirty paper! And dem music! only a triangle and two bells! Well, well! Psyche neber seen sich miserable spectacle! Fy! Psyche not dance wid an Adams-man!"

Up goes Psyche's head, with a look of sovereign contempt on the white banners and helmets, while obeying an order, already twice given, to change our plates.

But like lightning—provided lightning be an old duck—Sibyl waddles in, having carried rum to the two carpenters in the back-parlor, and overheard the words of Psyche, her grand-niece. As a matter of course, the Adams party must be vindicated at all hazards. Aristocratic to the backbone, she bears on her gray, fuzzy head a turban, the present of the defunct Baroness Carondelet, who flourished half a century since. This precious ornament is only displayed on the highest occasions.

"What!" she screams, "you good-for-notin' ting! shame of de family! you be flogged wid de broom! You slander Adam party! you Jacksonite! you!—you!" and off she moves again, to view the departing Adamites, singing in full chorus to martial music:

"John Quincy Adams, he an old American,
Yankee Doodle, Yankee dandy.
Andrew Jackson son of nasty Irishman.
Irishman says, black man nebber handy.
Yankee doodle, Yankee dandy."

Off marches the martial troop, two ranks in Indian file, husband and wife, with banners and music, viz: one triangle and two cow-bells.

Psyche reports the movements of both parties to us while we are seated at table. Suddenly her report ceases. Shrieks and screams are heard, which are not the re-

sult of joy. Bangor and Gracchus junior hurriedly enter the ante-room, while the tumult increases. The above-mentioned boys ejaculate: "Dem hab berry bad manners, him be horrible niggars." The noise increases beyond measure; Psyche cries out: "Dem fight." I retained my seat, not so Louise, but she soon understood the sign given her by me.

"See whence the uproar," I called to Bangor.

Bangor soon returns, and relates, in broken sentences, the manner in which Tiber and Mrs. Tiber had expelled Prona from the dance; how next Cæsar had declared himself in favor of Prona; afterward Achilles, Priam, Hector, and half the heroes and gods—in a word, that war was about to commence in their Olympus.

"I order them instantly to discontinue the dance," I quietly indicated to Bangor. Bangor leaps, and Gracchus leaps, and Sybil waddles to announce the high decree.

I sat dignified, like a justice over a ten-dollar suit. Entire silence followed the decree. The uneasy movements of Louise in her chair remained unnoticed by me, for Bangor and Psyche pierced our eyes. Their desire to read our thoughts was evident. Finally, we rose; Louise and myself gravely entered the piazza, and from thence the place on which the dancers were assembled.

It appeared from the judicial trial, that Tiber, or rather Mrs. Tiber, had ejected the lovely Prona from the feast; that said Prona had styled Tiber "a dirty niggars;" that said Tiber had returned the compliment by calling Prona *one* no better than she should be; and lastly, that gallant Cæsar, exasperated at the latter abuse, had advanced toward Tiber, with the entire force at his command—his skull—and defeated him. The sentence of the delinquents ran thus: That of the parties engaged in the disturbance of the peace, Prona, Lady Tiber and her lord, retire to their respective domiciles; and that Cæsar, after receiving a few lashes, be confined. The peace thus being restored, the ball was graciously permitted to proceed. Although now the fiddle was wanting, the joy at the wise sentence remained unabated.

Such is our art of government, its kind and manner. *Qui nescit dissimulare, nescit regnare*, here also forms the foundation. The threads are not nicely woven, still they answer their purpose; if finer, they might give way. The best materials for a durable and unfluctuating government, are an unchangeable degree of coolness and dignity, combined with

the proper dose of humanity, which leads us, not to neglect the welfare of our blacks for our own, and an amount of wholesome severity, which does not shrink, in case of necessity, from applying a lash or two. Too much tenderness is a fault in the slaveholder; with it, he is unfit to own slaves, and the latter are unfit for him. He must use the lash, as the father uses the rod. He must be the physician to administer sanitary doses—not the Russian with his scourge, or the British drummer with his cat-o'-nine-tails.

"You everlasting preacher," laughed Louise, covering my mouth with her hand; "will you not discharge Tiber from his prison?"

"Half an hour more, and we will see."

But Louise thinks the music too miserable.

"Yet, Louise, Tiber's fiddle has but three strings, and the harmony of the chord is horrible; and besides, dismissing him immediately would be no punishment. Let him continue half an hour longer in his confinement, and he will enjoy the more during the four remaining hours to midnight."

Louise bows her head, saying, "You are right;" and we continue our supper, rise, and again enter the dancing hall, where the dancers enjoy the sport as though they had the best orchestra in the world.

With suitable dignity I beckon silence to the musicians, and announce to all interested, that at maum's request their full complement of musicians should join them—that Tiberina and Cæsar should be permitted to dance, as also Prona, who, like Sempronia of blemished reputation, raises her ankles more nimbly than is necessary or decorous. The joy is general, and they cry, "God bless maum!" A dozen hastened to announce to the prisoners the decree: the pardoned appear; and, after a short admonitory sermon from me, they mingle among the joyous. Tiber shakes and presses the hand of Prona. Cæsar and Tiberina grin with pleasure.

Happier faces than those of negroes cannot be seen, when they are fully convinced of their master's desires for their welfare. People also dance at the north and at your Philips balls; but what are their artificial steps, when compared to the natural bounds and *con-amore* dances of our Creole negresses? Strict principles are required to prevent us from being affected by their attitudes. Voluptuousness is visible in every motion. The men are novices opposite to them, and spoil their most graceful *pas*; however, they are paid for the latter damage by thundering boxes

at their ears, dealt out by Crassus, who, as master of ceremonies, holding a flag in each hand, one white and one blue, stands in the centre—boxes, I say, that would painfully tingle on any other than the skull of a negro, for a week to come.

In the ante-chamber the two carpenters are seated, gravely debating, as long as the contents of the two rum-bottles last, which had been given them as a Sunday treat. Intoxicated, they go to bed; but the majority of the negroes hardly think of spirits, though by no means averse to them; the presence of their ladies suffices—in this respect also, the negro is an ape.

Quadrille succeeds cotillon, and the circling waltz; in this last, the females are adepts. Nothing more exquisite! The midnight hour gives the signal for retiring; the men offer their most profound bows; the women their courtesies, all screaming, shrieking and howling: "God bless massa and maum." Highly pleased, yet not oversatiated, they depart, after the lights are extinguished, for their huts, and the strange negroes for the plantations of their masters. Again peace reigns over the land.

Here and there figures are seen moving before their doors in their little gardens, and are heard to prattle and laugh; soon, also, these voices are hushed. The bull-frog becomes more audible, the low howlings of the alligators, and the acute cackling of a few wild geese, sound from the opposite shore; the wings of night are spread over the western hemisphere. Sweet slumber to you all.

Sleep has not visited us. Louise draws her mantilla closer around her shoulders, and her arm resting in mine, we walk, accompanied by Marius and Sulla, through the village, listening to the whispers of the northwest breeze, wafted from the palmetto fields beyond the river, to cool our brows.

The night is lovely. The moon, with her glittering disc, sparkles as if composed of myriads of fire-flies, in the azure and cloudless firmament; she smiles so benignly on us, we feel our souls elevated, our fibres grow more elastic—we feel so light, so happy, our language is more fervent: but—

"What is that? Sulla, what news?"

Sulla shakes his tail, and Marius, as if to direct our attention that way, turns his snout toward a negro hut.

I was excited at this interruption. "Ah! one of those infernal, black night-walkers returning!"

"The silence of Sulla and Marius," remarked Louise, "proves him to be one of ours."

Her whisper is interrupted by the following:

"Pyrrhus, be decent niggar; Pyrrhus not a whole night stay 'way from him wife. Dat be not Pyrrhus."

"What the deuce is that? who is there? Louise, stay here. I'll see! This is the hut of Pyrrhus and Venus, this her voice; but their quarrel sounds so original, and originality is not their fault."

Louise withdraws her arm, and I, stepping a few steps forward, behold Pyrrhus trembling like an aspen-leaf.

"Oh! sweet, dear, good Venus! Mistress Venus! Pyrrhus no more stay out late—Venus, for messy sake! Venus hab messy—open—it be Pyrrhus!" prayed Pyrrhus. "Pyrrhus beautiful silk kerchief bring for present, bring much oder ting. O Venus! Mistress Venus! Lady Venus! Only dis time pardon, dat massa and maum not hear!"

Venus came from the hut. "Noting hab to do wid him Pyrrhus; dat not be Pyrrhus; dat a vile niggar, dat says him bin to preachin', but him bin to Symmes."

"Handsome Venus! good Venus!" begged Pyrrhus, before the door; "sweet Venus! for Hebben's sake! let me in, else massa hear; it be Pyrrhus! Pyrrhus been to meetin'!"

"Dat's not true," resounded from the interior. "Pyrrhus be a gemman of berry good manners; him stay home wid him wife; but de niggar outside be a Maroon niggar; a really vile, tievish niggar."

The scene was too good. Inside, a witch of a negress, about to deprive poor Pyrrhus of his identity—and the poor devil, trembling with fear, again and again adjuring the goddess by all that is holy, and asserting himself to be Pyrrhus; she screaming out that "he be not Pyrrhus"—Pyrrhus being a gentleman, but that Pyrrhus at the door "a bad, vile, and vicious niggar."

That, I fear, is not altogether wrong. His fancy for woman excepted, Pyrrhus is a good boy; industrious, and pretty faithful. On his account, I acquired Venus for four hundred and fifty dollars, from Baker's station, to put an end to his continual excursions; but he who worships at the shrine of Cythera, pursues a sad course, requiring a powerful remedy. He appears to be inconstant or to have resumed his former excursions to said station, at which he obtained so many floggings at the hands of the overseer. I am right; for, as I approach, touching his shoulder, he shudders, stoops as if to evade

a blow, looks up in a bewildered way, and on recognizing me, falls on his knees.

"Pyrrhus!" said I, "I see you have risen early."

"Risen early, massa," Pyrrhus replied, laconically.

"You are cold."

"Be cold, massa."

"But it is not cold, Pyrrhus."

"Be not cold, massa," stammered the black rascal.

"Oh, massa! massa!" I hear from the interior.

"Venus! what is it?"

"Massa! massa!" cried Venus, throwing open the door, and flying out in negro-negligé, viz. a fragment of a chemise: "O, massa! Pyrrhus be horrible nigger. Venus him no mote hab for husband: him say, him go to meetin', and him go to Symmes's."

"Pretty stories, Pyrrhus, I now hear of you. Yesterday you announced yourself anxious to attend meeting, and you swore to me, to hear the sermon of the venerable Roebuck."

"Massa! Pyrrhus go to vener'ble Roebuck! Oh! massa! Pyrrhus be horrible nigger! Look massa, how him go to vener'ble Roebuck! Oh, massa! massa!"

With these words she begins to divest Pyrrhus, (who trembles like a victim about to be slaughtered,) of his jacket and shirt, and points in the moonshine to his bruised back. Pyrrhus, after this second defeat, appears to have lost all courage, and has no objection to make.

"Massa! see more!" screams Venus, and would have continued her services as valet, had I not stopped the proceedings for the present.

At this crisis, the head of Pompey, who also had declared his intention to attend the meeting, appeared from the next door.

"This then is your piety, Pyrrhus!" I commenced in an ominous voice. "So this is your piety! You desire to go to meeting—you express a wish to attend the sermon, and instead of doing so you go in search of vile females—leave your wife, to whom you were married scarce four weeks since."

Pompey suddenly interrupted me.—Merely covered with his shirt, he bounded before me! Triumph was visible in all his features.

"Ah! massa!" he burst forth. "Pompey him been at de sermon."

"And Pompey may hold his tongue until his turn to answer."

"Oh, massa! massa!" cried the contrite Pyrrhus.

"Massa! believe him not! Him tell lie. Him lie like black nigger."

Pyrrhus and Venus are mulattoes, but Pompey is a true ebony. He poured his wrath on Venus:

"Oh, massa! Venus be mulatto! Ha! ha! She, when on Baker's station, let in all man—ha! ha! She be no better dan she ought to be!"

"Hold your tongues, Venus and Pompey. So Pyrrhus has been at Symmes's, and received a flogging?" I asked him.

A negro never speaks the truth, so long as a lie remains available.

"Pyrrhus not been at Symmes's," he cried.

I had beckoned to Bangor, who, hearing my voice, came up. I took from him the whip.

"So Pyrrhus has not been at Symmes's?" I asked again, raising the whip.

"Pyrrhus been at Beard's," howled the negro.

"And not at Symmes's?" again I asked, while the scourge was about to descend on his back.

"Pyrrhus been to Symmes's," he finally cried out.

"Massa!" cried Venus; "Venus hab notin' more to do wid Pyrrhus; him lie like horrible nigger, him say him been at sermon."

"And massa say, Venus hold her tongue, else him will force her to it."

"Oh, massa! massa!" cried Venus undismayed, "him horrible nigger! him run after ebery garl at Baker's station."

The noise had awakened all my negroes, and, like imps, they approached from every corner.

"Pretty stories," I continued in the tone of Corporal and Tony, "pretty stories, these I hear of you, Pyrrhus. You now have your third wife, and you are not yet satisfied."

"Oh, massa! massa!" cried Pyrrhus, "she bad woman; she say Pyrrhus no gemman: him hab horrible manners."

"She is right, Pyrrhus," I confirmed.

"Massa!" again cried the contrite negro, "Pyrrhus neber do so no more; in future him go to preaching—him swear by Hebben!"

"Him say Hebben—him swear by Hebben; him be damned eternally," interrupted Pompey in a solemn tone, and with uplifted eyes.

"Hold your tongue, Pompey, or I'll flog you."

"This time," said I, "I will pardon you, Pyrrhus, since you have had your portion from the overseer of Mr. Symmes's plantation. Had you remained at home, like a de-

cent negro, you would have shared the rum and other good things. On your next transgression, you march to Merveille's sugar plantation. I want no vile negroes, who leave their wives, in order to pursue pleasures elsewhere. You know it is not my practice to joke."

The negro fell at my feet, like a log of wood. The mention of Merveille's sugar plantation, has also softened the heart of Venus.

"Oh, massa! pardon Pyrrhus! Venus pardon him—him be dear, dear Pyrrhus!"

I motioned her to be silent.

"I suppose, Pompey, you will have a similar story to tell?" I said to the somewhat intimidated rival of Cæsar, whose eyes however, indicated a better conscience.

Pompey is a short, sturdy fellow, with a pair of shoulders and blades, which might serve as a model for the statue of Hercules; very brave, true, and industrious. He is the most regular attendant at the exercises of the newly arrived Rev. Roebuck, and already adopts the peculiarities of the Methodist persuasion—a circumstance, by the by, very unpleasant to Mrs. Howard; also to me. But the negro is like myself, a creature of his Maker, and thus is bound to worship him according to his ideas and abilities. He performs this duty in negro manner; everywhere he sings sacred songs.

"Massa!" cried Pompey, rolling his big eyes; "oh, massa! Pompey go hear sermon, him lobe to go. It be his pleasure—to hear, to sing—oh, massa! him sing beautiful songs."

Again turning his eyes, raising them toward heaven, he begins to sing:

"O Jesus, my hope and joy!
Pompey be, O Jesus, thy boy."

The source of these desperate poetic effusions is unknown to me; however, the Methodist clergy pursue a wonderful course.

I shook my head.

"That is no spiritual song, Pompey; Pompey, you have not heard the sermon; I fear, both you and Pyrrhus have attended the same meeting," I added, in a severe tone.

"Oh, massa! massa!" cried Pompey, "Pompey been at sermon; him know all, him know ebery ting him hear. Pompey, massa, tell de whole."

I regarded him more gravely. "Pompey, you have a good tongue; but——"

"Oh, massa!" cried Pompey; "Rebend Roebuck preach fine sermon, massa; oh, massa! fine preaching," he cried, more and more exultingly. "Him say we Jesus lobe, we Jesus carry in our heart,"

"What else?" I asked.

"Oh, massa! him say, if once we Jesus lobe, we shall all our days lobe him."

"More?"

"Him say, all bad niggars, dat swear by Jesus, all be damned."

I regarded the negro closely.

"Him say, Jesus be our consolation and our hope, massa! Yes, dat he did, massa! Consolation and hope, and lobe. Oh, him make fine preachin'!" he stammered.

"And what more?"

Pompey tears open his eyes—grits his teeth, and pauses a moment. Then he resumes:

"More massa? Massa! him always say we must Jesus lobe; Jesus be our lobe!"

"All very well; love Jesus, and fulfil his commandments, and you will not repent it."

Pompey rejoiced.

"Oh massa!" cried he, "Pompey bery much lobe Jesus, always lobe him, carry him in him heart, but Pompey ——"

Here he stopped, dashed both hands behind his ears, and began to scratch himself prodigiously.

"What is it, Pompey?" I asked.

"Oh massa!" cried Pompey, still engaged in the above-mentioned operation, and regarding me steadily, evidently at a loss how to lay open his desires.

"Oh massa!" again he cried.

"And what?"

He stops for a moment, coughs, and finally mutters in a low, confidential tone:

"Oh massa! Pompey say, Pompey desirous to know, if Jesus been white or black lobe, a white or black female?"

The latter part of the sentence he thundered out, tearing open his mouth and almost piercing me with his eyes, evidently much agitated, to obtain information on this important topic.

I am pretty well accustomed to the *naïveté* of negroes; but in the present instance, I was near being thrown off my guard.

"Jesus was a man, Pompey," I replied, with as much dignity as possible.

The negro regarded me, as though he had fallen from the sky—almost angrily.

"Ah! massa joking, making fool of Pompey," he replied, shaking his head.

"If Jesus be a man, why Massa Roebuck say we lobe?"

"Jesus was a man, the son of God; thus we are taught by religion," I replied, with proper gravity.

The negro shook his head again, and regarded me with greater earnestness and doubt; and, when at length the solemn

expression of my countenance persuaded him of the truth of my assertion, he cried out:

"Oh! dat Roebuck! How can him tell us to lobe Jesus, if Jesus been man; why shall we him carry in our hearts? Cuss him, dat Roebuck!" he cried, more fiercely. "How can him say dat, to lobe Jesus, if Jesus been man! Pompey already four Sundays lost him rum and fish, and twice fine frolic; him will have notin' more to do wid Roebuck—him not want him preaching. Him be no fool. Wherefore him Jesus lobe, if he been man. Oh! dat Roebuck!"

"Do as you please," said I, not especially irritated at the anti-religious change of the negro. "A decent negro remains at home on Sunday, and cares for his wife and family."

"God bless massa and maum!" cried Pompey and Pyrrhus, and Venus, and all; then kissing the dress of the approaching maum they retire, crying once more "Good night massa, good night maum!"

Sacred as religion is to me, and as it should be to every reflecting being, and much as I esteem freedom of conscience in every thinking person, this religious system, the system adopted by our Methodists, Campbellites, Mormons, &c. &c., is hateful to me; the entire proceedings are carried on in a mercantile manner. Like agents, the reverend gentlemen are distributed; and individuals who, a few weeks before, perhaps, worked at a trade, now fill the heads of our Indians and negroes with their crude ideas—transforming them from simpletons to perfect fools. I have never yet found a negro or Indian who had been improved, or converted by *these* missionaries, but hundreds of times have I heard language more revolting, than that cited above. I have due respect for the true spiritual vocation, and for those men who enter the wilderness, to prepare our Indians for religious education by suitable employment; but spare me from these "camp-meeting" preachers.

I am anxious to know the opinions of Rev. Roebuck. He dined with us yesterday, and complained much of the lassitude of our negroes, among whom, notwithstanding all his labors in the vineyard of the Lord, he had only been enabled to plant twenty vines. These twenty vines, Pompey among the rest, consoled him vastly. Pompey chiefly contributed to this consolation, since he found in him a strong impulse, even a kind of contrition. A pretty contrition it was, indeed!

"Louisa, shall we walk in?"

CHAPTER II.

THE PLANTER'S WEEK.

A SPLENDID morning! Myriads of stars fade from the dark-blue heavenly dome, which now reddens in the east; and the lofty magnolias on the opposite shore sparkle like royal crowns! Strange ideas often cross my mind; our Louisiana is still half chaotic, yet how wonderful a land! The mysterious dawn, bursting forth into the glory of daylight—the wonderful swan-song at a distance, deadening in its rich harmony the shrill sound of the water-fowls—a few silver-toned notes from the king of all songsters, the nonpareil—the increasing prattling of the paroquets—and the awakening picaninies, girls, and women, increasing like the murmuring of the waves! While you are listening to the various sounds, and the strains of God's invigorated creation fill your soul with gratitude and praise; a stream of light, nearly blinding your eyes by its rapid appearance, calls to your mind the fiat of the Almighty: "*Let there be light!*" With this phenomenon commences the daily bustle and uproar. We know of no transition state; in our physical, as in our moral life, all is propelled as if by a spring; no twilight—no dawn. The barrenness of winter, and the blossoms of spring, change in a day. There is something fantastic in these rapid changes. But a quarter of an hour since, all lay buried in the most profound silence; now all is life and motion, as in a beehive. The signal has sounded, and, as if it were the call of an invisible power, the black forms hurry like demons from their huts. The movements of this elf-like gang remind you for a moment of the infernal powers. Simultaneously, turkeys and hens leave their roost, flocks wander to their pastures, old and young pigs grunt, picaninies scream, old Sibyl and Calypso scold, and all commence their rigmarole to enjoy the coming day—to scream, to prattle, to sing, and to leap—a confused mass, two-footed and four-footed, feathered and unfeathered creatures. The finery of yesterday, the silken shaws, the golden earrings, the striped pants, are dismissed, and doubtless now lie covered with dust and mud; since negroes are the most careless of beings, never thinking of the morrow. On every side you behold curved legs, bearing the calves in front instead of in the rear. Light cotton inexpressibles, and, in the cool of the morning, shirts of like material, form their costume; but, in com-

paring their appearance of to-day with that of yesterday, the former is the most favorable, since it is in accordance with nature, and nature is attractive.

You can imagine nothing more picturesque than these twenty blacks, now regarding Tiber with open mouths. He announces to them the order of the day, which he received from me. Hardly has the last word escaped his lips, when the whole body take a turn, "to wish massa a good morning!" This pleasure they cannot be deprived of by any possible means. Tiber, irritated at their delay, shakes his fist, styles them dirty negroes, and grows angry, but they come to my window notwithstanding. "What Tiber say den? dem not see massa, and wish a good morning? Dem will see massa; him be deir massa!" and on they jump. "O massa! good morning massa!"—"But boys," I say, "the cotton!"—"Nebber mind cotton, massa!"—"But boys, your pensa!"—"Pensa! O massa! massa!" they cry, turn their baskets, and march off—march off? no, dance off, is the better expression—balancing their heads in a theatrical manner on their bodies, they gesticulate, prattle, and talk to each other, to Marius, Sulla, the little pigs, the picaninnies—in short, to all they happen to meet; and with a nonchalance, too, as if there existed no pensa in the world, or as if it were at their option to go or to stay. The negro, when in good-humor—and this he always shares with his master—enters on his occupation with a sort of grace, and a lightness of heart, never found among the white population. You are disgusted with the gloomy expression of the white laborer, compared with that of the black. The latter exhibits in his carriage his entire being, even in the most common occupations—something poetical, which can only be explained by the constant presence of their black ladies—the centre of all their thoughts and desires. While marching off, they meet a dozen black nymphs, holding in one hand the vessels with homminy, in the other, pieces of ham and salted fish. It is well worth while to behold the amorous and graceful movements of both parties. The couples of a cotillon party could not surpass them. They assume the most admirable attitudes—beware not to express any admiration, else this farce becomes endless. The women are clad in short skirts and chemises, with a fastening around the neck. Mrs. Howard had some trouble in enforcing the covering of their bosoms. Look, how they manœuvre and coquette! Voluptuous beings these negresses—voluptu-

ous by nature, by instinct; in them it is not so much vice as a bad habit, which should be well distinguished from the lasciviousness of white females. However, it is a strange fact, that our female slaves, notwithstanding their animal passions, never descend to the lowest grade of infamy, like white or colored females in the north. They do not even offer their embrace for sale in the disgusting, shameless manner of the whites. Even in their baseness there is something natural. Fickleness, a light heart, hot blood, the desire for a new ribbon or silken kerchief, are their stimuli, which always keep them above zero; for the same reasons, they never ascend to the high moral feelings or the chaste love of the whites. Something brutal, and instinctlike, ever predominates, preventing extremes.

In the foreground, on the steps of the farm-house, you behold a group worthy of the brush of Wouvermanns or Vanderhelde. It is formed by a dozen black, naked picaninnies, from two to six years, and as round as the little pigs, their companions. Two of the imps are seated on the knees of Sibyl, and two others on those of old Calypso; the balance play with the pigs, or wend their way toward the two black Hecates. There is something touching in the motherly tenderness of old Sybil.

"Dou darlint," she cries, "dou lilly, lilly niggar boy be—dou my darlint be—my lilly niggar boy, massa's niggar boy." Thus she exclaims, raising him to her withered lips, pressing them on his white teeth, and then forcing between them a spoon with hommony. "Dou Sibyl's darlint lilly niggar—dou massa's dear lilly niggar!" again she cries, applying another spoonful.

The monkey rolls his eyes, and the dame applies, under similar effusions of affection, a spoonful to the other babe. "My lilly, lilly niggar!" she cries; and two others approach, those on her knees falling down, the pigs hurrying on to profit by the remnants of the homminy around the mouths of the picaninnies. All roll, scream, and grunt—a scene for a painter.

But no time for painting! The negresses have consumed their breakfast, and depart for the fields. Let us follow.

For four weeks past we have been engaged with our cotton crops. The labor of the negroes is divided in pensa, obliging each male daily to gather from eighty to one hundred pounds of raw cotton, each female from fifty to eighty. The filled baskets are received on boards in front of the cotton-gin, where the material is spread out until it is sufficiently dried to pass to

the gin, there to be cleansed of its seed, and to be pressed in bales. Commonly, the negroes have completed their task by 4 P. M.; the hours remaining till sundown are at their disposal, and they either hire their further services out to their master, or devote these hours to their private affairs. The former is usually done by the men, in consideration of from eight to twelve cents per hour. The women care for the kitchen and fields: in the fields they raise vegetables and tobacco; and especially the latter, of a good quality on our Red River, yields them a handsome sum. Each family has pigs and poultry, which are maintained in the woods and plantation at the expense of the planter, and which are intended for the use of the steamboats. Every male and female negro receives monthly a bushel of corn, which they prepare in large hand-mills for their favorite homminy.

Weekly rations of meat, ham, and salt-fish, and half-yearly allowances of clothing for winter and summer, are dealt out to them. Their winter clothing consists of a woollen blanket, of which the women prepare a suitable garment, with the necessary material for pants; for the summer the clothing is cotton. This amount of clothing is authorized by law, and adopted on every respectable plantation. The work is light, conducive to health: manuring and other heavy field labor are unknown. Thus the lot of the negro, in a material point of view, is so little to be deplored, that most of the heads of families treasure up large sums, with which they could readily purchase their freedom. They prefer to remain in the family, in which they were born, and where they are treated as members of the household. I consider our treatment of slaves the best, although the Virginia mode has for its panegyrist, the great Jefferson. With us, they learn the value of property, by actual possession, and this is the surest road to their civilization and cultivation. Slow as it is, it progresses. The treatment of the slaves improves, the government grows milder—and would become much—much more so, were it not for abolitionism in the north. Oh, those benighted abolitionists!

TUESDAY, September 23d.

To-day old Peter arrived with his family—Batucca Indians, residing twenty-four miles from the Rapids, who usually assist in the cotton crops. The family, consisting of the wife, sister and two daughters, work in a separate field. To ask the man to lift his hand for any servile purpose, would be

a deadly insult. He rests on his rifle, his faithful companion, viewing the labors of the women and girls, and perhaps also thinking of his son, who three years since fell a victim to revenge. He resembles a colossal statue of bronze. An Indian is a dignified picture of manly composure; motionless he stands for hours, or lies stretched in a picturesque position, reminding us of Marius on the ruins of Carthage. Were he only more temperate! A drunken Marius! terrible!

The same composure marks the women. No contrast can be greater than that between female Indians and negroes, in the field. The Indians moving like automations from tree to tree, at the utmost exchanging significant looks with each other, but silent, exhibiting in their entire being a stoical apathy, mingled with a certain pride, which forbids them to condescend even by a smile to mingle with laughing blacks; the negro for ever in motion, prattling, laughing and joking. If he finds no human being with whom he can pass his time in social converse, he turns to the first object that meets his eye. A dog, a cat, a mouse, or a rat, answers his purpose, until something new turns up; and only when this novelty is not to be found, does he grow irritated, impatient, and dull. The negro has this extraordinary desire for society, or, as the French say more acutely, for *amusement*, in common with that nation. A Frenchman always desires to be amused, to chat—*chanter*, as he calls it; and once reduced to himself, he soon loses those brilliant attributes which, while they so eminently distinguish his nation, expose, at the same time, a want of mental consistency and creative power. Surely we find in civilized life nothing more stupid—the negroes alone excepted—than a Frenchman or Creole, who has been deprived of society for any length of time. His decline in civilization is striking; he evinces not the least desire for mental enjoyment; reading he considers a loss of time—folly. He is entirely the opposite of the American or Englishman, who even in solitude progresses onward—yes! and in it, will become an independent man. Behold him on his remote plantation, in the midst of a natural forest, developing his entire strength of character, with all its energies: he is independent. May not the natural superiority of the English and the Americans, and the higher degree of civil liberty to which they have attained, be considered as attributable to their different elements of constitution, and national

character? I think so. Where the necessities of society demand it, the individual raises no objection to restraints, necessary, on account of the centralization of the social laws.

September 24th.

One of Taby's twins has died in consequence of the carelessness of its mother. Last evening she returned from the cotton-field, where her presence had been expressly forbidden; placed her basket with cotton on the staircase of the farm-house, for the amusement of a dozen pigs, and bounced up the stairs to her chamber in which the twins were sleeping. One of them she finds in a heavy sleep—she thinks it dead—shakes and pinches it, until the child opens its eyes; its mother behaves like a crazy woman, bursts open the window, and cries: "Picaninny not dead, him live!" The evening air touches the heated child. An hour later, vehement spasms ensue—the symptoms of a lock-jaw. Notwithstanding the protracted efforts of Mrs. Howard, the poor babe died at seven o'clock, A. M. The grief of the poor mother is boundless. Like a Niobe she stands, her tear-filled and swollen eyes turned heavenward, her arms motionless at her side, and incapable of uttering a word. Thus gloomy clouds pend even over a happy family. At the same time, a bag of coffee and a loaf of sugar have vanished from the store-house: all deny any knowledge of the theft, and of their own accord, said articles could not have taken life and fled. To find one's self *minus* thirty-nine pounds of coffee, a loaf of sugar and a picaninny, is enough to disturb the patience of any man!

September 25th.

Papa Menou surprised us for a moment on his journey to Woodville, from whence he intends to convey the Doughbys to the family feast on the 5th. Emily is also to be of the party. He was accompanied by Messrs. Kirby and Southby, who left the steamboat for a few moments, to inform me of the result of yesterday's meeting at Baker's station. It had been called for the purpose of devising means to stop the increasing operations of the abolitionists—but chiefly to consult on the propriety of forbidding the attendance of our negroes at schools and their instruction in reading. In this resolution, they wished to unite the enlightened example of Carolina and my beloved Virginia. Kirby was of the opposition party, and instructed by me to leave all to us, the planters, and to distract attention, by establishing associations like the temperance societies, whereby the General Assembly would not

have been compromised, while the power would remain in our hands. But he was overpowered in a manner characteristic of the Louisiana spirit. The Creoles instantly voted for the proposition of the president to empower the Representatives of the county, to sustain in the General Assembly the law, forbidding under such and such penalty, all and every instruction to the negroes. "What! learn to read?" cried all, as much amazed as though it had been proposed to teach our flocks of cattle to read; "that must be prevented by a state law." It is only astonishing to me, that said motion has not been entered as a codicil to the constitution. These Creoles, like their trans-Atlantic brethren, the French, take an astonishing pleasure in giving laws, and always remind me of "Monsieur Tonson," in the farce of that name. A fire breaks out in his vessel; volumes of smoke penetrate the hatches. Fifteen night-caps of as many Frenchmen had been ignited; Captain Tonson registers the law, forbidding, from henceforth, light and fire in the vessel. The darkness of the ensuing night causes a sailor to injure his foot. Captain Tonson establishes a new law, ordering his men to wear heavy boots. With them on their legs and feet, the sailors cannot ascend the rattling: a new law ordains the destruction of the rattling; the masts fall overboard, and the vessel goes to Davy Jones: but no matter, Monsieur Tonson has governed according to law.

While we accompany our friends to the steamboat, half my negroes approach at full speed, "to see Massa Menou." My order that they should return to the fields, sent by Mr. Wright, remains unheeded. They grind their teeth—"What hab him to say? Him hab notin' to say; massa order, massa hab not'ing to object, when massa nigger see maum's papa." Having seen maum's papa, they open their mouths and scream, "God bless Massa Menou!" and depart roaring with laughter.

Menou thinks my discipline too loose. It may be—but I cannot help it. Surely one would be, to use the elegant language of the respected editor of the Gridiron, a brute, if one punished such conduct!

September 26th.

People often consider the life of a planter in Louisiana, a continued series of enjoyments; a resting on rosebeds, in a palanquin, fanned by a couple of negresses, and so on. But in truth, our planter's life offers fewer comforts and enjoyments, than fall to the lot of the northern citizen, who may perhaps be less wealthy.

Take for instance our table. It is laid out all the week with ham, buckwheat cakes, and fried potatoes—an article of luxury, since they are imported from Ireland. Now and then for a change—mackerel, a hen, or turkey—of which, by the way, some sick negro or other, has his share. Venison is plenty, it is true; deer and bears daily appear on the edges of the forest, and swim across the river; wild geese and ducks fly by thousands above your head, often drowning your voice with their cries; but we have no time to think of shooting them, and even did we spare a shot, ten chances to one, that an alligator would dispute the possession of the prey. Alligators and snapping-turtles fill the river and lake, south of the plantation, and bayous surround us in abundance. Dogs and negroes dread the sight of the latter, their bite being dangerous. Thus we never think of hunting, even were the heat less oppressive. By the most scrutinizing order alone, we can discharge our numerous daily duties. Mrs. Howard is in motion from early dawn. The picaninnies must be attended to also, the families must be supplied with their rations, and cared for in many other respects. A negress never deposits her Sunday garment in her chest, but allows it to remain all the week on the floor under her feet; and on the subsequent Sunday, marvels at its soiled and ragged condition. Their corn rations will surely, in less than an hour after their distribution, be a prey of pigs and turkeys, if not cared for by white hands. There is no end of scolding and quarrelling—thus the female Creoles have an unmelodious and quarrelsome voice; even Louise's strains begin to partake of that acute sound. She is for ever in motion; Psyche behind her, with ten bunches of keys, unlocking and locking; a store-room, remaining opened for ten minutes, is sure to be ravaged or emptied. These negroes steal worse than crows, conceal the stolen goods wherever they can, and what they cannot hide, they destroy. Coffee, sugar, fish—especially spices, disappear most amazingly. The coffee and sugar of yesterday are sources of vexation. The store-room remained open not ten minutes—off went the goods; none can tell their whereabouts. Hannibal is strongly suspected. He is a great thief, and his malicious glance forebodes no good.

While Mrs. Howard has the care of fifty negroes, no small matter for a lady of nineteen, on me devolves the duty of superintending the cotton and corn-crops, the cotton-gin, and a thousand other things. Nothing but an exact knowledge of each

man's capacity, can secure the master against fraud and ruin. Newspapers, pamphlets, and late works, arrive daily, but remain unopened. Where could one find time for them—where the desire to read?

"But why not free your slaves? why not rid yourself of this plague?"

That is not the question of a wise, nor, not even of a prudent man. Why did not Washington, or Jefferson, and Patrick Henry, names venerated by every tongue, liberate their slaves? Because they were persuaded that such an act would be no blessing to their slaves, and a loss to civilized society. A brutal race—a race brought among us without our consent, cannot be civilized in a few years—nor be taught in so short a space, to *bear liberty*. Years, nay, centuries, can alone achieve that end. First learn the character of the slave, and then speak.

September 27th

The wind has changed since yesterday, southeast by south—thermometer 77°; the heat would be supportable, were it less close. The greatest luxury is to change one's shirt a dozen times a-day. I am just about creeping, with the aid of Bangor, into the eighth, and have only breath enough to order, "a glass of lemonade." Bangor hastens to the saloon.

"Maum! Massa, a glass of lemonade."

"What is Mr. Howard thinking of?" I hear maum crying, before she appears at the door of our chamber.

"George! lemonade? Madeira or Bordeaux with water."

"I prefer lemonade, Louise!"

"That cannot be, George. You return to the fields, and lemonade is heating and weakening to the stomach. Papa, you know—"

"Louise, you are as cruel as the devil was to his eminence the great lord of the bedchamber."

"I as cruel as the devil was to his eminence the great lord of the bedchamber! Strange comparison! And what of that?"

Ladies sometimes bear the devil in their hearts, but rarely on their tongues.

"First, I will tell you about this eminence. He was a very exquisite man, in high favor at an English or Spanish court, chiefly owing to a habit he fortunately possessed, of being charmed with every look and act of royalty. Thus, finding everything charming, his life ran charmingly on; but at last, his days drawing to a close, he found himself sufficiently unwell to travel charmingly to

—to—to a sort of subterranean Louisiana. On his arrival in those regions, he was met by the devil, who had been advised of his approach at the gate of his majesty's residence, and was introduced by him and his adjutant, to the apartments. 'How is your eminence pleased?' asked the black king, on entering the portico. 'Very well,' replied his guest. 'Very well—sublime illuminations—splendid scenery—would like to have one of our painters at hand.' 'Happy to hear it,' replied the devil; 'only I feared that the somewhat high degree of heat, might incommode your eminence.' 'Not at all,' replied the lord. 'Truly! very comfortable—somewhat warm,' he continued, drawing forth his Madras kerchief, which went up in flames while in his hands—'but a glass of lemonade will be cooling.' 'Lemonade!' repeated his satanic majesty. 'Lemonade is heating, would increase your thirst, and produce other serious consequences; but we have other precious fluids in our vaults, clear silver with a solution of alum and sulphur, well adapted to our climate, and constitutions like your honor's! and the whole brewed in newly invented patent ovens. We have a choice collection of drugs for our guests; thus, we keep coarse sulphur and fluid cast-iron for the lowest classes; copper and lead for the somewhat higher; and silver with an addition of melted gold for gentry of your station—pure gold, watered with the clearest aqua-tofana, is for the highest visitors who may honor us.' 'Very happy,' replied his eminence. 'I see you observe etiquette. I had really dreaded to come in contact with the horrible piggish mob, or even to be placed on an equal footing with the republicans.' 'Your eminence need fear nothing of that sort,' replied the devil. 'The latter all dwell in the so-called New World, at the distance of a thousand miles from this my Eastern residence—in the West, still very moist and damp, and where all, in consequence of the beloved equality, are cast into the great stream.' Louise! that must be the mighty Mississippi."

"You are wicked!" said Louise, a somewhat pious Catholic, who considers this no fit subject for joking.

"And you, my angel, my guardian angel, hand me Madeira or Bordeaux."

Louise is comforted by seeing me drink, and lays her arm round my heated neck. She is a Creole, and thinks she cannot be careful enough in her diet. In the evening, after a breath of air has given another direction to the musketoes, I open the

windows, but silently they are closed by my careful Louise.

"Leave the window open, I pray you!"

"You know, dear George, night dews, night air, and especially night drafts, are dangerous!" and she unmercifully closes the window.

Psyche brings lemonade, but Louise empties it in a basin; thus I often think myself the student Lubberhead, and Louise Magister Pepperpot in petticoats.

To speak the truth, Louisiana is a country well adapted to change man to woman, and *vice versa*. Consequently, these female Creoles appear more like men, than their husbands. It is truly a land of laziness, well adapted to a nature originally aristocratic and idle, perhaps, with a hue of the democratic, if only the heat and vapors were less oppressive, the atmosphere less hot-house-like, and the musketoes less ravenous; but these draw from you the last remnant of warm and pure blood, and leave little more than red, cool salt-water in the veins, creating salt humors and cruel liver complaints, which your negroes are made to feel!

While Louise and myself, seated at the tea-table, listen to the prattling of Psyche, suddenly a loud noise becomes audible among the returned negroes. I observed something like a want of harmony in the fields, on the delivery of the cotton: now a conflict appears to ensue;—at this moment I hear a loud clap:

"Hannibal," cries Psyche, "gib Tiber a box."

I remained seated, but now Tiber raises such an unnatural cry, that Louise drops her cup and hastens to the window.

"For Heaven's sake, Howard!" she cries, "Hannibal kills Tiber."

In two bounds I was among them. Tiber groans under the hands of Hannibal, holding him as a tiger does his prey. After I had dealt out a second blow, he lets go his hold, and casts a glance at me such as a tiger casts at a lion, whom he seeks to deprive of his booty. Tiber cries:

"Boe, Boe! coffee tief, coffee tief—bite off my nose! Boe, Boe!"

Tiber's nose had been removed, and the rascal, to prevent all repairs, had destroyed it with his feet. My Virginia negroes approach with chains; Hannibal is fettered and taken to prison, and Tiber to the hospital, where his wound is washed and dressed. I am not apt to lose my self-possession, but the malice of the villain so exasperated me, that the entire weight of Louise's arguments hardly sufficed to keep me within bounds.

6 o'clock, P. M.

The trial discloses gloomy facts. Hannibal is found guilty of having stolen the bag, with 39 lbs. coffee, together with the loaf of sugar—of having carried them to Taby's room in his basket—hiding them under Taby's bed; and Taby, of having readily agreed to conceal the theft. A portion of the goods were carried in her pockets to the hut—the greater part, however, to the fields, with a view of concealing them in the hollow cotton-trees. This, then, was the cause of her eagerness to be engaged in the cotton fields, and the death of her poor picaninnies. The most aggravating circumstance, though, of the whole is, that the couple drew ten of my negroes, lately acquired from Menou, into the plot. A longer concealment was impossible; my Virginians were suspicious, and announced their suspicion to Tiber; he was approaching to acquaint me of the circumstance, when he was attacked by Hannibal and deprived of his nose. I never had trusted that fellow, nor Mrs. Howard, Taby. We tried on them, however, the experiment of kindness and benevolence. For the last four weeks she had been maintained from our table, and had been actually overwhelmed with kindness. This was the reward!

All this is the more ominous, since it bears symptoms of a growing plot, which only required time, to produce open rebellion. Hannibal seems the proper man to promote such mischief. However, night may bring counsel.

September 28th.

At the peal of the breakfast-bell, the steamer, "The Red River," approaches the dock, and my father-in-law, with two strangers, steps on shore. One of the strangers is Vergennes, and the other, doubtless, his countryman. Louise astonishes her papa by her hasty embrace. The poor child has not closed an eye all night, fearing every moment an outbreak of our negroes, and imagining our property on fire and myself deluged in blood. Now she falls, in a state of the highest excitement, into the arms of her dear papa: "Oh! papa, how happy we are to see you!" Trembling, she paints the whole story in the blackest colors. Papa shakes his head and says:

"You are too kind to your negroes—allow them too much liberty; and abundance creates pride, and from that arises sad consequences. These may easily cause a terrible catastrophe," he continued. "Negroes must be treated well, but also strictly, so that they may find no opportunity of weaving mischief. As regards the bag

of coffee, it is a minor circumstance; these negroes steal like foxes—it is their nature; but the circumstance of ten of your negroes having been engaged in the plot, shows a combination among them. A bad sign, Mr. Howard. Harshness would not be worse, since harshness holds the negroes in awe, if not too severe."

In this strain he proceeds; he is a father—a planter. I cannot blame him for feeling anxious for the welfare of his child, but such sermons appear somewhat strange in one's own house, and when one is conscious of acting as one should. I was about to acquaint him with my views on the subject, when a youthful voice was heard from the opposite shore.

"Halloo, boy! hoist your jib, and take my yawl in tow—I mean, the trunks on the beach," called a young man, kindly, to my negroes.

I am not a little astonished at beholding a youth, in a tight military summer-coat, with an erect collar.

"Very fine linen," remarked Louise, notwithstanding her late panic.

Women have remarkably sharp eyes in this respect. He is well built, measures about five feet nine, and presents an expression, evidently more ready to command, than to obey. With firm dignity he ascends the piazza. Inquisitively I regard my guests, but only learn from them that the young man in question had been their fellow-traveller in the boat. Having knocked at the door, he enters, and glancing at each one present, his eye rests on me:

"I believe I have the honor of addressing Mr. Howard?"

"That is my name; whom have I the pleasure of seeing?"

"A friend of Morton."

"Then you are welcome—truly welcome. How is Morton?"

"He lives in remembrance of the happy years of his youth, which he enjoyed with you. My name is Granby. Mr. Doughby may have informed you of the rest."

"Once more, heartily welcome!"

The young man handed me his letter of introduction with a grace, which at once bespoke the gentleman. He is the son of Isaac Granby, one of the most humane and respectable planters in Tennessee, and has just completed his education at West Point—a passport of admittance to every house. His intention is, after a few years, to settle in Louisiana; and in the meantime to acquaint himself, as overseer of a respectable plantation, with our mode of living. Good! that's my man, we stand

in need of such individuals, possessing humanity, cultivation and property, to regulate, if not harmonize, the distorted features of slavery. He comes as an angel from heaven at this moment; for, to be surrounded by a group of narrow-minded Creoles, ever in fermentation, now boasting to the utmost, then again crouching in the dust, makes life a burthen! It is no easy task to remain collected and cool during these everlasting attacks. I cannot deny myself the pleasure of proving my confidence in the new inmate of my household, by giving him a true description of yesterday's transaction. Menou, his hands at his back, crosses and recrosses the saloon in heavy agitation—the young man remaining silent. We seated ourselves at the breakfast-table, and the conversation grew livelier because of his presence, and that of the Frenchman.

After breakfast I proposed a tour through the camp and the plantation, on which we were accompanied by the two Frenchmen. It is Sunday. Some of the negroes are in full dress, but as if conscious of the above-mentioned discourse of Menou, they bend their heads very respectfully, as he passes, without honoring them with a syllable. Only a low murmur is audible: "God bless massa! our beloved massa! Good morning, massa!"

I was much, very much, pleased with their murmur.

"It is evident," remarked Granby, "your slaves are not governed by the lash. That is also my father's system," he continued. "Severity, with moderation, and mildness, void of sentimentality, are the sure roads by which we may ultimately arrive at the point so much to be desired, viz., dispensing with the scourge. Yet when it is necessary, it is mistaken philanthropy to abstain from using it. A blow, inflicted at the right time, may prevent incalculable misery."

That man speaks with discretion. He appears intimately acquainted with the details of a plantation, and the peculiarities of the negroes; indeed it could not be otherwise, since in his youth he daily witnessed their treatment. In the course of our conversation, we enter Hannibal's prison, where we find him in chains, in a posture partly sitting and partly reclining. He made no answer to the words addressed to him by me, but darted a tiger-like look at me, and then cast his eyes to the ground, as before. The young man shook his head on hearing the former life of the slave. Papa Menou had taken him together with Taby, some two months since, in

payment of a debt of \$1000 from Le Compte. Both are worth about \$1400: but he possesses an incorrigible, malicious temper, and has absconded several times. His features betray furious brutality.

Granby thinks that such an individual is always more or less dangerous on account of the remoteness of the plantation; but under such circumstances he should grant him a deliberate trial. "Negroes, if treated ever so well, are the same as all individuals suffering oppression, who find themselves deprived of rights, ever so dubious."

Menou bites his lips at these words.

"They are by nature malicious, and the more obscure their consciousness, the greater their readiness to revenge themselves on those whom they deem their oppressors."

This feeling of revenge can only be quenched by placing the blacks on an equal footing with the whites; this being impolitic, we have to bear with many inconveniences. Granby advises to announce to the couple their banishment to Merveille's sugar plantation: in the mean time, to observe them closely, and if at the moment of embarkation, they exhibit repentance, to pardon them at his (Granby's) request. He should rejoice, at opening his career in Louisiana and on my plantation, with such an act of mercy.

Spoken as if from my own heart, and even Papa Menou agrees, although he asked Granby if he attributed rights to negroes? Granby smiles, and regards the man searchingly, saying, "his father had two hundred negroes, and considered every one of them to have the same rights. Mr. Menou is too enlightened, not to acknowledge it."

"Let these questions rest: by and by comes the Montezuma, and we will follow your advice, Mr. Granby."

4 o'clock P. M.

The atmosphere is gloomy, oppressive to suffocation. A dead calm, and millions of musketoes penetrating our very clothes. Bad signs, these! Both Frenchmen are nearly in a state of dissolution; and we are not far from it! Wine and victuals remain untouched. Is it the effect of a feverish temperature, or ill humor, that fills me with these sad presentiments, and makes me thus uneasy, exhausted and fatigued? I know not. I feel as I did on this same day, two years since—that, to me, ever memorable 28th of September—on board the Scipio, on the Gulf of Mexico; we had a similar dead calm and oppressiveness, heat, and lassitude. At 4 o'clock, our Scipio

whither we followed. The roaring of the was as fine a ship as ever rolled on the blue element; half an hour later, ten feet of water covered her hold, her masts overboard, the railings broken, her boats staved, and the ship threatening every moment to sink, and rise no more. This is just the same hurricane atmosphere.

My negroes collect in the meantime before the house; their looks are anxious, and, especially among the guilty, a peculiar murmur is audible. Papa Menou, myself, and Mr. Granby, enter the piazza, opposite to which they are ranged. I present to them their new overseer, whom they shall obey in everything. Whispers and laughs are heard, as among sailors, when for the first time they see their lieutenant; and crack their first and last jokes, regarding his appearance. They stare at him for an instant, wink at each other, nod their heads, and seem to study his weak points from his eyes, but murmur contentedly: "Tanks, massa! tanks for gibin' us Tennessee man—and no Creole or Frenchman!" No great compliment for Menou and the two Frenchmen. The women laugh, squeezing their handkerchiefs, but suddenly a dead silence ensues. I had beckoned to Pompey and Tully, to produce Hannibal and Taby.

The negro approaches with downcast eye, stands before us, and hears me, without changing a feature. Taby, however, begins to howl, on both being accused by me of ingratitude and base deceit; however, of true repentance, not an atom is to be seen. We contemplated the couple for a moment. Menou shrugs his shoulders, Granby shakes his head, and I pronounce the sentence, condemning them as thieves and seducers of their fellow negroes, to be transported on board the steamer *Montezuma* to the sugar plantation of Merveille.

The word sugar-plantation, created a general panic. Hannibal darted a furious look at me. Taby threw herself at my feet: "She neber do it again;" "she swear, she neber more steal—she be no more wife of Hannibal—him bad nigger, him she seduced—him not de fader of her picaninnies—she massa conjure, she not send away, she be good." Menou and Granby whispered to me to await the last scene. To separate a married couple is cruel, but to mete out equal punishment to the seduced and the seducer, is more so. And yet, it is impossible to retain Hannibal on the plantation. I was undecided. In the meantime, Pompey and Tiber had carried the property of Hannibal and Taby from their hut, bearing it to the shore,

steamer was audible; soon she hove in sight, and a signal being given, she approached the landing. I acquainted the captain with our object, and he promising to land the negro in safety, two sailors were ordered to convey him on board. I addressed him once more, fixing my eyes steadily on him, and then beckoned to the sailors to take him. He readily approaches the gangway, but there he stops for an instant, then looking wildly around him, his hands unshackled and his feet lightly chained, he forces the two sailors aside, bounds forth with both feet together, falls and rolls like a serpent with incredible rapidity, and cries: "Hannibal not go to sugar plantation!" Down the bluff he flies, with one single effort more he casts himself in the river, which is at least thirty feet deep, and in an instant seizes him in its resistless current.

A loud, uncouth, brutal cry—howling, and laughing, on deck.

"Five hundred dollars, by Jove!"

"Halloo! the alligators and snapping-turtles have a feast!"

"Ten dollars he sinks!"

"Has sunk!"

I heard nothing more, but beheld the hand of the negro once more stretched out of the water. The acute, painful shriek of a dying man sounded to me from the floods. I had leaped into the river on one side, and seized hold of his hand; Granby on the other supported his woolly head. A rope thrown to us, guided us to a perpendicular bluff, along which we were hoisted like three hanged bodies. I hasten to Louise; she had fainted in the arms of her father, who was still occupied with her.

I hear the doleful voice of Hannibal:

"Massa, Hannibal kill, but not sell to sugar plantation!"

"You shall be spared this time. I hope it will be a warning to you."

Thus you have one of our Sunday amusements! The day is pregnant with evil;—the greatest, I fear, is yet to come. Let us change our clothes.

5 o'clock P. M.

Every moment grows more gloomy. For two hours past, no portion of the heavens has been visible. The air surrounding us no longer deserves that name: it is a heavy, offensive vapor—as if all our hundred thousand morasses, lakes and bayous, had waited toward us their venomous miasma, to draw down upon us the entire fury of the elements. An indescribable lassitude and terror has seized on every living being; even the bullfrog and alligator have

become mute; the voices of our negroes alone are audible, but even they sound unnaturally hollow, as though they came from watery graves. They carry the cotton, spread over the boards, to the gin. Mr. Granby, bounding toward me, points to a bright yellow stripe in the southern sky, rapidly approaching us; a hot, venomous breath becomes sensible, insomuch that all our bones and limbs seem insupportable.

"An ominous messenger, Mr. Granby. Take ten additional hands, to bring the cotton as quickly as possible into the press."

I give the signal, and all the negroes hasten from the camp.

"Pompey, Cæsar, Tully! secure the boats; we may need them. Plato, Cyrus, and Tiber! place the fire-engine behind the cotton-gin!"

The sun is still on the horizon, and yet darkness surrounds us. This darkness during day time, those lamps moving from place to place, and at the distance of twenty feet lost to sight; those screams and howlings, meeting your ears on every side, produce a wonderful effect. The two Frenchmen, coming from the gallery, drop down on the piazza with fatigue. No wonder! the air is so suffocating, that even the lights burn no more, but only flutter, dim and sick of existence.

Suddenly Vergennes cries: "Sair Howard!"

"What is it?"

"Sair Howard! vill you not comme here?" again cried the Frenchman.

At another time his jargon would have appeared highly amusing to me; now it is actually disgusting to my ear.

"Vat is dat?" he asked, pointing to a light spot, presenting a phantom-like appearance in the chaotic darkness.

I looked—it was light; but not that of a lamp—it was a flame! fire! Fire in one of the negro huts; God have mercy upon us!"

The sight had restored to me my entire strength. I bounded toward the light, as if propelled by an exploding powder-barrel. The light increased the nearer I approached; it was a flame from one of the negro huts. On reaching it, I met Taby. "De scoundrel!" she cried, "trottled me, beat me, him set fire to de hut—him gone, him escaped. Oh, massa! my hut, Taby's hut!" I hasten to the hut. The fire rages within, stretching its tongues through the door and window; so terrible is the pressure of the atmosphere, so suffocating are the vapors, that the flame evidently succumbs under the watery element. Shutting the door and window hastily, I cry for the engine, and

run to hasten its arrival—but I am stopped by a rearing noise. And such a roaring! as if a hundred thousand valves of a thousand horse-power steam-boilers were pouring out their glaring masses. I look up. The bright yellow stripe with light borders has changed to an immense crater; the heaven, as if rent in twain, rests over us, like an enormous lion, stretched from one hemisphere to the other, and opening his fearful jaws.

I only had time to hasten to the house. Crying, lamentation, and uproar proceed from the cotton-gin, where Menou has sought shelter with black and white. I call to Granby, bound toward the door, and at that moment the terrible phantom opens its throat; again the hissing and roaring, then follows so tremendous a whistling and howling, that the surrounding forests are shaken to their roots, appearing to whine for aid, even from weak, mortal man. The waves of the river flow backward, the spray gushes into our faces, the woods groan, the strongest trees break, thundering as they fall. Our organs of hearing and sight refuse their service—our senses fail!

I stand confused, incapable of uttering a word, Granby near me, observing the direction of the air-current. The terrible element is still engaged in its conflict; nor yet has any party yielded. Neither thunder nor lightning, but now a current of air, first of short duration—it lasts a minute—stops, as though it were collecting new force—an intermission terrible to the senses, since the fury of the element seems bent on penetrating the utmost cavities of the globe, to seize it with its almighty power, and hurl it onward in its wild career.

"Now is the time, Mr. Granby! Hasten to the farm-house with all; follow me. It lies on the lee-side of the wind."

I leap into the cotton-press, call for Louise, and Louise for me. I raise her to my arms, and hasten with her to the farm-house, while not a sound escapes her lips. I hasten back, seize upon Mendu, half-carrying, half-dragging him toward the safe spot; the negroes follow like children, whining and shrieking; limbs, branches, and entire trees, are hurled around us on every side. Another gust of wind—a fearful crash—the gust seizes its prey—the cotton-press trembles.

"God have mercy!" cries Menou; "if this lasts ten seconds more——"

His words are hardly uttered—the wind howls more loudly, between its gusts a tremendous crash—a crash surpassing the loudest battle-roar—live-oaks of a thousand

years break down like summer-houses—rafters fly, windows burst—suddenly a vehement shock, a rent—the roof of the cotton-press is hurled far away, as if by the power of ten thousand horses.

"Save yourselves!" cry twenty voices; which instantly change to mournful lamentations—for now ensues such a roaring, groaning, and howling of the raving elements, that I actually begin to fear that lands, houses, fields, woods and huts, will be razed by the fearful hurricane, and hurled to the four corners of the earth.

Thus it continues ten long minutes.

Suddenly flames break forth from the house, faintly illuminated by lamps. New whining and howling of the negroes, crowding like sheep toward the gate, "Marsa, for God's sake, let us out! us burn."

"Silence!" I cried; "silence!"

I open the door—posts, trees, and rafters still pass us, like grape-shot during a battle. But I must be out. "Louise, detain me not—firebrands fly in every direction. Come, Granby!"

We hasten from the house.

Firebrands are visible from the shore, but no bright flame—smoking trunks, propelled by the storm, are hurled to the beach. My house appears invulnerable. On approaching it, I hear a friendly melodious voice, asking the blessing of God through the storm.

"Whom do I hear?"

"The Lord tries those whom he loves!" replied the voice.

"Is it you, reverend sir, in this fearful storm?"

"It is I!" spoke the servant of the gospel, who had sought and found in my house, protection from the fearful hurricane. "I am Père Hyacinth."

"See you the fire?"

"The Lord tries, but destroys not. It is one of your negro huts floating down the stream."

I felt a peculiar sensation on beholding the man of God thus tranquilly before me, in the conflict of the elements, as if I listened to the voice of God from the clouds. And as if he had understood its dictates, he seemed commissioned to announce them; his deep, expressive, and edifying language, caused me to forget tempest and storm, and I listened, as I never listened before.

The storm itself seemed penetrated with the voice of the man of God, and appeared ashamed of its fury; the howling of the raving tempest abated; its gusts became feeble, its groans and whistling less penetrating. Streaks of light, the messengers of peace, became visible on the dark horizon.

The door of the asylum was opened. I hear my name called by Louise and her father.

"Here, dear Louise, I am listening to the word of God!" I replied, strangely moved. "Père Hyacinth, if you have a few more words to give us, give them here! Strew out the seed of good; since the soil is loosened, the seed will take root and thrive."

The man of the gospel spoke, and his words were uttered with a reverence and emotion, touching and edifying to his hearers. Louise and her father listened with folded hands and tear-filled eyes to the pious preacher, exhibiting to us in the howlings of the storm, the merciful Lord and his redeeming Son. Even the two Frenchmen are moved by the sermon, for the first time in their lives, according to their own confession.

Never could I before have felt thus devoutly religious; but the terrors of a hurricane from the Mexican Gulf, teach man the power of God. Yes, yes, they must teach it, if his mind is possessed of the smallest particle of perception. Thanks to his saving mercy, and the woods, created by him for the protection of his frail creatures! without them, our bodies would have been torn to atoms, or our limbs maimed for ever. In an eloquent exordium, our preacher admonished us, nay, conjured us, to spare also the trees, those creatures of God. The tree also, he continued, has feeling, is a creature of the Almighty, created for our advantage and the glory of his name—thus, man shall not destroy it in his exultation and without absolute necessity.

CHAPTER III.

A NIGHT SCENE ON THE RED RIVER.

THE hurricane has raged with greater destruction above. We are visited by this terrible guest at irregular intervals of from two to five years. This time he came from Attakapas and Opelousas, and swept in a northwesterly direction over Ouachita county, an extent of not more than a mile in width, but in length more than two hundred, to the woods of southwestern Arkansas. There its full fury was felt. Whole forests lay prostrate, plantations were destroyed, men and beasts maimed and torn in pieces; houses and huts were raised like flakes of cotton, and carried over an incredible distance. On the other hand, there were many hair-breadth escapes. At Cole's station, the dwelling-

house of a planter was raised from the ground, and removed, without material damage, to a distance of some sixty feet; the planter broke his right arm, while his wife and two small children remained uninjured. Strange to say, the man had just committed a brutal act with that arm. He bears the reputation of an inhuman tyrant.

Our damages are comparatively moderate. The fragments of the roof of the cotton-press lay deposited at the distance of some thirty feet; seven negro huts, outside the line of the camp, and exposed to the fury of the storm, have also vanished; the whole plantation is literally strewn with logs, limbs and branches of trees, rails, &c., &c. However, no lives have been lost. Numerous wounds and contusions have been received, but spirits of wine will soon restore them. The balance of the cotton crop has suffered but little, though the dry branches have been broken, but not removed, by the tornado. Fortunately for us, the hurricane was a dry one: a wet one would have caused our certain ruin. Yesterday, we collected the fragments; to-day we continued gathering our crops. My father-in-law has promised to send some of his black mechanics, to aid us in restoring our losses.

Hannibal has disappeared. Whether he feared an *arrière pensée*, or mistrusted the truce, I know not; and I am yet undecided concerning the means which I shall employ to recover his person. For the present, we may rest assured of having to sustain a weekly loss of a few pigs and turkeys. This sort of robbery is the revenge common to our runaway negroes, until they are recovered, or return to their duties. Proper maroon negroes, as in Jamaica, or formerly in St. Domingo, who lead an independent life in the woods, and form a Flibustier republic, we luckily have not, and never shall have, since our backwoods cross the country in every direction. Without this lucky circumstance, our existence would be very precarious.

October 1st.

Papa Menou has departed with my two French guests, for his plantation; a circumstance pleasing to me, since these Frenchmen are uneasy beings, perfect charlatans. During the hurricane they were so dismayed—their courage had deserted them to such a degree, that they sought a retreat behind the negresses, who now amuse themselves not a little at their expense; the next day they were again complete heroes, criticising the Italian campaign of Napoleon. Politics formed their

everlasting conversation; while our hands were full of work, on that topic they debated with an eloquence that would have done honor to the first lord of the treasury. All this could have been endured, but their continued manœuvring with hands and feet, and the rolling of their eyes, was too ridiculous: the revolution of '89 seemed to be on the eve of being repeated. You might have imagined them a couple of Mexican banditti, threatening your life; their eyes sparkled, their hands now theatrically resting on their sides, then again anxiously clinched; their attitudes heroic, their declamations loud and eager. All this is insupportable, entirely at variance with our ideas of a gentleman. However, both belong to good houses; d'Ermonville, the son of a marquis, both descendants of historical families; but both lack the dignity of a gentleman, based on the consciousness of its weight in civilized society: both are void of the feeling of independence. The true gentleman must invariably appear the same, never lose his self-control; he must brave the storm and enjoy the sweet fanning breeze with equal composure; he must receive the sheriff with a warrant in his hand, and the neighborly friend, with equal dignity. All this requires a safe position, both in political and social life; a position which the Frenchman has not acquired as yet, and never will achieve; his "habeas corpus" act has only left the overthrown Bastille, to settle in the Concièrgerie and La Force; and that consciousness of his precarious existence gives him a discontented, boisterous, and odious manner. Thus, it follows, that the true gentleman can only thrive among an entirely free population, and in monarchical or aristocratic countries—in fact, only in the highest state of society.

"You ought to write an appendix to Chesterfield," laughed Louise.

I must laugh at myself. This continual commanding and reprimanding gives me the appearance of a schoolmaster, at times ridiculous in a man of twenty-eight. But how can it be otherwise on a plantation, where one is surrounded by nothing but black visages, admiring one's wisdom, as the Hebrews that of their kings? By degrees, however, one becomes divested of this robe of infallibility. I am anxious to know the effect of matrimony on Doughby.

October 3rd.

Shipped forty bales of cotton yesterday by the steamer Red River, and forty-five by the Montezuma to-day for the city—Relieux-Press. Thus one half of the crop is safe,

7 o'clock, P. M.

"Surely this Taby ought not to be trusted entirely," whispered Mr. Granby to me, after a hot day's work, on passing Tiber's hut, the temporary residence of Taby.

"At least, I dislike her brutal want of feeling toward her child, in open contradiction to her former tenderness. Sibyl complains, that the child had received no milk for four days. Have you noticed anything else?"

"She has much conversation with Prona, whom I also suspect. While we forwarded the forty-five bales to the Montezuma, it being twilight, I noticed the latter behind a pile of wood, with a mulatto, the steward of the steamer. She presented him with three bunches of tobacco leaves, which kindness he returned by giving her three bottles, doubtless filled with rum. Is she inclined to drink?"

"Not to my knowledge; something else, I fear, is in operation. At any rate, the traffic of the steward is illegal, and must immediately be complained of. Have you questioned Prona, Mr. Granby?"

"No, sir; I wished previously to state the facts to you. She carried the bottles to Tiber's hut."

"You were right. We must instantly ascertain the true lover of the rum. Is old Peter yet sober?"

"I believe so."

"Hint to him that his services might be wanted this afternoon, to make sure of his sobriety and watchfulness. Our Indians have at last acquired one thing—that is, to deny themselves half a spree when hope is held out to them of a whole one. Now let us take our supper."

We sat down at the table, and after the waiters had departed, I stated our discovery to Mrs. Howard. It is a principle with me to offer my wife her due proportion of everything, good and bad. She reflects for a moment, lays her finger on her mouth, and regards me with such exquisite cunning, that I hasten for a mirror to exhibit to her that interesting expression.

"But, George," she laughed, "be not so silly."

"What more, my dear? I perceive I have thrown you off your guard——"

"Not so," she replies positively, and pronounces, as the priestess from the oracle, the word "Hannibal."

"Hannibal!" cries Mr. Granby, who had been entirely overlooked; "is that it?"

"You may be right, Louise, but what has Prona to do with him?"

"That time will show," replied Louise, laconically.

Mr. Granby retires to his chamber, and we extinguish the lights, the night-lamp excepted, at the usual hour. I seat myself with Louise on the sofa in anticipation of coming events. Her arms resting on mine, she prattles a while, then her words grow to a whisper, lower and lower—at last her voice ceases; my second self, my nobler, sweeter half, slumbers in my arms—I hold the dearest of all my burthens; but at that very moment I hear the light step of the Indian in the ante-chamber, and his light tap at the closet door. I deposit the head of my angel on the bolster of the sofa, press a kiss on her rosy lips, and leave the room. On entering the ante-chamber, the Indian stands before me. He whispers the word "Salt-lick," and hands me a pair of moccasins, which I exchange for my shoes. With two pistols, always ready for cases of emergency, in hand, I follow Peter, who, fantastically enveloped in his blanket, precedes me toward the live-oak forest, joining the plantation in the southwest, and bounded in the west by a field of palmettos. Between the forest and field a natural alley is formed. On passing the last cotton-field, we are joined by Mr. Granby, with Marius and Sulla, both chained. I loosened their chains, giving them the watchword, to which they listened with wonderful interest; and then made sure of their comprehension of the word, by a peculiar bend of their heads. Sulla followed the Indian, already in the natural alley; Marius accompanied us; neither of the dogs uttered a breath. The apathy of our dogs toward negroes, is as remarkable as the affection of the pigs for them—and vice versa. Behold the condescension with which Sulla allows himself to be touched by the picaninnies, while he suffers himself to be shaken and worried by a white child. I stood in reflection for an instant—the silence of the grave around us, a greenish silver veil lying over our plantation. I cast a glance at the roof, covering *my all*. Oh! if we love sincerely and with all our heart, how gloomy, how inexpressibly gloomy appears to us the circumstance that removes us from the beloved being!

"Granby," I exclaimed, "laugh not; conjugal love bears the impress of the divine! When you shall press a tender wife to your bosom, then you will feel what now I feel."

Granby warmly pressed my hand, and we proceeded in silence. I felt moved—only the dull monotonous cry of the white-owl was audible in the alley; a few trembling moonbeams followed, and shed

their pale light around us; but in a few moments the darkness of the forest came upon us. We crept and stepped over branches and logs, dislocated by the storm, Marius before us as our guide. After we had proceeded for about half a mile, a light was perceptible. We approached carefully. At the distance of a hundred paces we stopped, as if riveted to the ground.

Before us stood a huge live-oak, in the immense crown of which the rays of the decreasing moon mingled as strangely with the curling smoke-clouds of a large watch-fire, as though a hundred demons celebrated their nocturnal feast. Not a breath stirred, and the red and yellow fire-tongues seemed to hasten to the embrace of the phantom of smoke, forming an arch over the majestic crown of the immense tree—for an instant, these apparitions whirled in the silver light of the heavenly fires; then, after one last and long embrace, vanished in the higher regions! Neither Granby nor myself were visionary, but we stood in silent emotion at the sight of these phantoms, as though we beheld the parting of living beings. God's nature is unexplorable, we may well say, without being a Pantheist.

We now cast our eyes toward the groups under the tree. Before a fire of cypress-wood, sat or reclined four forms, among whom I recognized Taby and Prona, after a second glance; the other two were men, at least, to judge from the formation of their shoulders; both were naked and tarnished with mud. They reclined before the fire; over it a small pig was roasting, from which they cut pieces, and ate them with avidity. The disgusting feast must have commenced before our arrival, since little more than the skeleton remained of the pig. None had hitherto spoken a word; but now, Prona approached the fire, pushed the skeleton, resting on a horizontal spit supported by two perpendicular stakes, into the fire, and with both hands seizing on the shoulders of one of the men, she pulled him into her lap.

"Milo hab drunk and eat enough; him be drunk," cried she, caressing the negro.

"Milo not hab drunk enough," howled Milo, rising and seizing a second bottle, between Prona and him.

Prona stretched out her hand for the bottle; but the negro, crazy for rum, tore it from her hand, and dashed her to the ground.

Having taken a long draught, he handed it to the second negro, who still remained before the fire.

"Hannibal!" cried Taby, "not drink too much—not too much, Hannibal!"

"So, that is Hannibal."

Hannibal raised the bottle to his lips.

"Hannibal drink too much," cried Taby, "him cannot go—him fall in massa hands."

"Ah! massa! massa big tyrant! Hannibal and Milo massa make dead."

"Him be tyrant," joined Prona. "Him and maum both be tyrants; him Prona drove from de house."

"Him be tyrant!" ejaculated the intoxicated negro, again placing the bottle to his mouth, but which Milo finally takes from his lips, empties, and casts in the fire.

"Massa be tyrant—Hannibal and Milo him kill!" cried the negro again.

I became more attentive. The words were uttered with a peculiar fervor—with the fervor of unquenchable revenge. Doubtless the black has horrible plans, from the execution of which he is only hindered by the irresistible liquor. Whence can the fool have imbibed that desperate feeling of revenge? he was always treated kindly.

"Hannibal kill massa!" groaned the negro; "but not kill maum—maum be friend of Hannibal."

Taby struck his side.

"Maum be tyrant! Hannibal kill maum!"

"Milo," interrupted Prona, "kill maum, or Prona bring Milo no more rum!"

"Taby bring Hannibal no more rum, if he not kill maum. Maum be tyrant!" she cried.

"Hannibal kill massa, but not maum—maum be for Hannibal," he stammered.

The eyes of the negro roll, and his fists are clinched, and he rises on his knees, endeavoring to raise himself to his feet, but in vain—he relapses.

"Hannibal kill massa, but not maum!" again he stammered.

"Hannibal also kill Taby and her picaninny, if she bring no more rum, but no kill maum!" he groans, with a hoarse voice.

With this groan he gets on his knees, then to his feet, and reels toward Taby who has leaped aside; he follows her, always crying: "Him kill massa, but not kill maum!"

The feelings raging within me, caused me, unconsciously, to raise one of the pistols.

At this moment a shot was fired. The four negroes fell to the ground, like trees whose life-roots have been severed.

"Mr. Granby, have you fired?"

"You see I have not, Mr. Howard, since I stand not twenty steps off."

"Whence the shot? and by whom? Have I fired? by Heaven! I know not: have I, or have I not?"

We approached the negroes—I myself almost frantic; the revolting words had inspired me with boiling fury, almost rendering me unconscious.

"Massa!" howled men and women; "we be dead! we shot! Mercy, massa!"

"We all be dead!" again groaned all, laying their faces to the ground.

Granby drew the handcuffs from his coat-pocket—at their sound they appear amazed, stare at us for a moment, and fall to the earth: "Massa, mercy! we be killed—we be stock dead!"

"Be quick!" I said, in a severe tone. "Hannibal, rise."

Hannibal obeyed.

"Massa!" he cried, "God bless massa! good massa! Hannibal, massa nigger; dat daur nigger bad nigger—Taby bad woman."

Granby placed the handcuffs on the strange negro, I on Hannibal.

"He Obeah man!" cried Hannibal and Taby, with tear-filled eyes; "he bad nigger."

"Mr. Granby, the women may remain unshackled. Where is old Peter?"

The Indian's whistle responded to the call of my bugle.

"Peter, where are you? why don't you come? was it you that fired?"

"The red man is on the hunting-grounds of his fathers," replied Peter.

The Indian, by the light of the watch-fire, had spied a buck. Let us see him.

I followed the direction whence his voice came, and found him some two hundred steps from the fire, busily engaged in severing the head from the trunk of a buck; he looks at me for an instant, then placing the bloody knife between his teeth, he mutters:

"Peter make better chase than white massa."

Without another word, he seizes the animal by its fore-legs, raises it on his shoulders, and beckons to me to do the same in regard to the hind ones; in this order we arrive at the fire, pretty well fatigued, with our burden of some three hundred pounds. On beholding myself and the Indian, the negroes at once forget all their terror and fear.

"Look, massa! deer shot!" they cry. "He carry him himself. Massa shot deer!" they scream, while tears stream from their eyes.

Strange creatures, these negroes—the sight of a newly-killed deer causes them to forget all their troubles. Old Peter seems to know how to take advantage of the occasion. He casts the fore part of the beast over Hannibal's shoulders, and beckons me to leave the hind part to Milo; the two women he "cords or binds" with his lasso, and with a hoarse "*Hon*," he gives the signal for the march. Marius and Sulla are at our sides, breaking out in a few sudden barks—and now and then encircling the negroes, as the butcher's dog his victim.

At the lapse of an hour, we had cleared the logs, boughs and palmettos, and arrived at the plantation. It was three o'clock in the morning.

Louise still slumbers on the sofa. I take the lamp and regard the beautiful woman. I feel as if pierced by a thousand daggers. The words of the vile black sound in my ears:

"Maum not kill! Maum be for Hannibal!"

The rays of light are shed over her child-like, tranquil features. She raises her eyelids, and with the sweetest smile, she cries:

"George! you up still? where have you been? You appear fearfully earnest. George, what is it?"

Her anxiety increases; she takes the candle, and gazes on me from head to foot.

"No, Louise, all has gone well; we may quietly retire. Come, dear wife!"

But she grows more anxious—more terrified:

"George, for God's sake what has happened?"

"Nothing, dear; we have caught Hannibal with a strange negro."

"And no misfortune?"

"None."

She still regarded me doubtfully and terrified, as though she had heard the revolting words. No, never—never shall she hear them! they would wound her to her inmost soul: to her pure heart, the mere thought of having excited the brutal passions of a negro would be painful, terrifying, horrible!

October 4th, A. M.

The strange negro caught by us last night appears to be the Milo on whose head a prize of \$150 rested for many months. He is a slave of Le Compte, and originated in North Carolina, where his obstinacy drew upon him the sentence of death, which, however, was commuted to exportation to Louisiana—the common mode in which our eastern and northern planters rid them-

selves of their good-for-nothing black criminals. After such a black demon has been convicted of a capital crime, the death-warrant is announced to him; but, instead of hanging him as a warning to others, the planter is at liberty to export him to another State. Thus we make of our own land a black Botany Bay, and increase the evil already gnawing at our vitals—all for the sake of a few dollars. Ah!

Quid mortalia pectora non cogis auri sacra fames!

Among us this thirst is too strong.

Let us see how Le Compte will proceed with the maroon.

One hour later.

Hannibal, Taby, and Prona, have embarked for Merveille's sugar plantation; they listened to the sentence, pronounced by Mr. Granby, with great composure—doubtless convinced of the enormity of their crimes, and the lenity of the punishment. As a last favor, Taby asked permission to see maum, which was granted. The tears shed were many; she begged incessantly to be permitted to leave her child, since it was offensive to the eye of Hannibal. This also was granted, as it would have been cruel to leave the poor infant with the heartless, and, as we are now persuaded, false negress. My blacks rejoice at being rid of this trio. All three of them are Creole negroes, and have committed numerous thefts. Every family has been robbed: salted meat, fish, corn, ribbons, and a number of other articles, were found in their chest. Men and women rejoice on seeing their property restored to them. "Dém not'in' more say, massa—maum make no more grief," is the unanimous exclamation. But a burden is taken from my heart also, since the departure of those wretches: for the last few days neither Louise nor myself could close our eyes. Enemy as I am of the scourge, every punishment which I am compelled to enforce, touches me more than him upon whom it is inflicted; and that is just the way never to bring your slaves to order. It is a gloomy fact, that our greatest tyrants are served the best. I sincerely desire the welfare of my slaves. I pursue the course which, I am persuaded, is the right one for their final civilization. I am resolved upon exerting myself to the utmost, in turning to advantage an evil existing in our civil society; but the difficulties increase beyond measure; my strength, my good resolutions, become exhausted, and at last I shall find myself a hard-hearted tyrant, like many others.

7*

The steamboat has just disappeared behind the forest of the plantation, and I am joined by Louise, equipped in her travelling suit. She admonishes me of the approach of the Alexandria, in which we expect our friends, and our wild Doughby. Once on shore, all thoughts of preparations for our departure are out of the question; she adds, that everything had been packed in one trunk.

"Very well," said I; "we may safely leave the house; the negroes have witnessed an example, which will keep them in awe for a time, at least. Granby, besides, is a gentleman, in the full sense of the term. I watched him during the hurricane; while the two Frenchmen howled, shrieked, and sought shelter behind the women, Granby stood like a naval hero in a battle, or a storm. We may be easy, Louise."

While I thus speak, a distant roaring is heard. Louise seizes a telescope from a sideboard, directing it toward the neck of land.

"A steamboat! There it is," I cry.

"There they come!" she echoes.

"Yes, it is they!" she repeats; "Julie stands at the beginning of the boat."

"Heavens! the beginning of the boat—an American lady, to call the bow of the boat its beginning!"

"Well then, in the bow," she laughs.

"Let me see;" but Louise is too much bent on her own observation. "Louise, you will injure your eyes," I exhort—but to no purpose.

"There is wild Doughby!" she cries; "he stands between Julie and another lady—it is Emily and Mrs. Houston, and the Richardses."

Now, for the first time, she hands me the glass, when I can see the entire group with my naked eye. We hasten to the shore—there is Doughby. Yet at a distance, he cries:

"Hurrah for Jackson! Glad to see ye all well and hearty!"

"The storm has not carried you off, I see!" he cries, still two hundred yards from the shore. The lungs of that man might serve as blowers for a moderate furnace.

"Oh, glorious Jackson!" again he cries; "oh, glorious Jackson! He has beaten you all hollow; sour-kROUT-German Pennsylvania fought for him as one man; Dutch New-York as two-thirds of a man. Hurrah for Jackson!"

"Hurrah for Jackson!" reiterated some thirty voices, while others whistle and hiss. So there still seems to exist a minority,

feeling itself sufficiently strong to keep the banner of John Quincy Adams in motion.

The steamboat lies at the dock. The planks are out. Doughby hastens on shore, drawing Julie behind him, hardly able to follow. He evinces some little signs of being a husband. Six weeks ago, he would not have touched the plank, but have bounded on shore from the railing; now he is very careful of his better half, although somewhat in the manner of half-witted Petruccio, in "The Taming of the Shrew." Mrs. Houston and Emily must do the best they can for themselves.

"Howard! do you hear?" he cried, seizing my hands, and pressing them so that the tears entered my eyes. "God bless you! I am so happy to see you! my pleasure is indescribable. And you, my dear sister-in-law, my dear Louise. God bless you, also! How does Howard behave? Not better than Doughby! What think you, Julie?"

Julie and Louise embrace, but the former finds time to rap Doughby's cheek with her fingers.

He continues:

"Ah! Howard, did I not tell you—yon old Virginian,"—pointing to Richards, "would not believe me, that I would bet on Virginia. Virginia's twenty-four votes, I said, are for Old Hickory and not for Clay; though he is a Virginian, his politics are Yankeeish—he is a tariff-man; and Maryland, and old Mrs. Houston also, go for Jackson. Mrs. Houston contradicted me, yet was unwilling to bet. Glorious old boy, that Old Hickory!"

Mrs. Houston has hardly an opportunity to ask:

"Where have you learned to offer bets to ladies?"

But he does not hear her, and continues:

"Halloo! what is that? the roof of your cotton-gin has decamped. These hurricanes are sad customers; we were spared this time, but shall have to make up for it afterward. A dry fellow, I am told; not a drop of rain has fallen. Halloo! Mr. Granby! God bless you, my dear boy! Howard, that's a Tennessee boy to the back bone; a friend, a supporter, and a neighbor of Old Hickory. He will make you open your eyes and ears, by narratives about the old man. Just relate the circumstance, Mr. Granby, about the young Indian, whom Old Hickory, in the battle of the Horse-shoe, raised from the breast of his dead mother!"

"Another time, Mr. Doughby."

"As you please; but you must hear it, Howard; you must, I say. Happy then,

dear sister? quite happy, I see that in your eyes. You were created for each other, like Julie and myself. Only think, Howard, she has learned to ride, and already rides like the deuce. When first I told her that she must follow the example of all our ladies, and learn to ride, she says: 'God forbid, Doughby! what do you think? me learn to ride?' But what did I do? I wrote to uncle Snapper, in old Kentucky, to send me a pair of gentle pacers—gentle and healthy creatures, that might be mounted by a lady with pleasure and safety. In less than four weeks I received two as gentle animals as ever trotted on the levee of the Mississippi. Julie was delighted, but still refused to mount the saddle. But I soon lifted her in, led the animal about the yard, and then left her to herself. She screamed tremendously, and I began to be alarmed; but soon she sat like an Amazon, and now rides as well as any dragoon. Howard, I ordered two Kentuckians, which resemble each other as closely as one egg the other—one for Julie, the other for her dear sister Louise. Dear Louise, I hope you will not refuse the present?"

Doughby's attention was very gratifying to Louise. The pretty animal, not more than fourteen hands high, is just leaving the boat, and prances toward us. While we are contemplating it, a troop of my negroes, with their women, return from the cotton-fields. They hastily spread the cotton over the boards, and bound, jump, and leap toward us. On their approach, they look at me for an instant; then all together, pointing with their fingers at Doughby, they cry to each other:

"Dat be Massa Kentucky, Massa Debil. Bless Massa Kentucky, Massa Debil!"

"Thank you, you black souls!" replies Doughby, whose association of ideas instantly takes a new turn. "But remember," he cries, raising his voice—"remember, if you dare to place, hang, lay, or in any way deposit your black, dirty, stinking bodies—nay, even a single leg, thigh, or any other part of your carcasses, on this noble Kentucky trotter—by Jove! I will mete out to you with this, my own hand—and it knows its duty—thirty-nine lashes, which will prevent you for two months from sitting, lying, lounging, standing, or walking!"

The negroes look at each other, open their mouths, eyes, and even noses; then cry again, as before:

"Massa Kentucky, Massa Debil! Dat be Massa Kentucky—he be Massa Debil!"

"Do you understand my words, you black fellows! To mount this trotter on

your diabolical midnight rambles, is never to enter your minds. I know you all to be horse-killers. Should you transgress on this animal, I'll beat you bent and lame—that is, your master permitting."

Doughby turned to me.

"How are the cotton crops? I have pressed eighty bales, sent down sixty, and think of pressing eighty more."

"I have pressed one hundred, sent down eighty-five, and think of making eighty or ninety more."

"Let us look at it. Red River cotton bears a good reputation; always fetches half a cent more than ours. I sell mine for fifteen cents. Let us see yours."

Thus saying, he took Julie's arm in his, drew her after him, and all had to follow for the purpose of inspecting the cotton.

"It's worth sixteen cents, among friends—not an atom less. If you dispose of it for less, you would deserve to sell matches rather than cotton. I send mine to Milan-don: he is sure and firm. Send him yours also. A Frenchman, 't is true, but resting on solid foundation. Halloo!" he suddenly exclaimed, "what said Menou? You had visitors—jovial Vergennes and a young count. An old count is said to be on his way from Attakapas, much beloved by our father-in-law—is of good family, and said to have brought money to the country—a rare case with a Frenchman; I wish they would stay in their own. These Frenchmen are no society for us: they are saucy as monkeys, and meddle in everything. I should like Vergennes to survey a lot for us on the Ouachita, owned by Papa Menou—a splendid site for a county town. But you can do nothing with him. He composes poetry and articles for a French paper in the city, the *Abeille*, I think—is a complete fool—wrote a long piece of poetry, commencing as follows:

*Vous citoyens libres !
Voyez les esclaves tigres,
Par votre cruauté.*

He was just about reading it, when Louise called to me. I advised him coolly to abandon such poesy, and not to mingle in things beyond his sphere, else our Louisiana might become too hot for him. He next edified me with an extensive tune on humanity, and philanthropy. 'I understand French philanthropy,' said I; 'our negroes know it also; "to have a French master is as good as to serve the devil himself," is a negro proverb. May God deliver negroes and us from their philanthropy.' These were my words."

"Doughby, I think you are right," said I, "but recollect he is a guest."

"Well, then he shall also respect the laws of hospitality. Listen to me, Howard. A foreigner, on entering a strange land, takes duties upon himself, which should be sacred with him; if he considers them not thus, and mingles in the affairs of a country with which he is unconnected, he is dismissed, as Genet was dismissed by Washington. We should never neglect our dignity, and our duties to the society, to which we belong."

"Upon my soul, Doughby! you speak like a senator of these United States," I cried, not a little astonished at the new language of this man.

"Are you aware," interrupted Doughby, laughing, "of the desire of all my neighbors, that I should announce myself as candidate for Congress, for our district? I assented, provided you would do the same in your district."

"God forbid! Louise and myself next year intend to visit the north, to make perhaps the great——"

"Fine fellows!" interrupted he, glancing over my negroes, "and you keep them well too, I see—that's right; live and let live. I say, you black devils," turning to them, "love your master, carry him on your hands; you'll never have a better home than that you have here."

"We know dat, Massa Kentucky, Massa Debil."

"And now you may know, that we are departing for Papa Menou's, and you remain under the care of Mr. Granby, as brave a Tennessean as ever stepped in shoe-leather; and if I hear the slightest complaint of your having been idle, having stolen, rebelled, or been drunk, or engaged in unlawful traffic; or of your having harbored negroes overnight; or of your having mounted the horses of your master at midnight, on your own excursions; or of your not having extinguished the lights; or of your having allowed hogs to feast on your corn and meat; or of your having robbed your master's house; or of your having gone to camp-meeting, and of your having brought from thence, instead of religion, a loathsome disease—if, I say, any such complaint be entered against you, I shall, your master permitting, half kill you."

My negroes listened to this long list of their crimes, with downcast heads.

"Massa," they cried, "we be good niggers."

"I hope to hear no complaints. I am not joking, am I, Howard? In the meantime, here is something for your enjoyment. Mr. Granby, will you please to divide this ten-dollar note among them?"

"I have cried myself dry, Howard—dry and hungry. A bite, and something to wash it down, would not be amiss. We have not much time to spare. All ready for the journey? Howard, were you aware that Julie had reduced my ration to eight glasses per day?"

"By Jove! I think she is still tolerably liberal. Louise, what think you?"

"Horrible," laughed Louise.

We stepped into the saloon, and now, at length, we were at ease to welcome our guests.

Mrs. Richards again bears the happy fruits of a joyous wedlock. The water of the Mississippi keeps up its reputation, and Emily revels in the anticipation of future bliss; she has entered on a new epoch of life—that of love. Something there is glorious and divine in love. Now, for the first time, I feel the magical wreath it weaves around our lives, binding in its enchanted circle, pleasure and care, sweetening and consoling both. But the souls of the lovers must be youthful—must, as it were, grow into each other, as our vines become entwined with our magnolias and live-oaks. Emily appears happy, quite happy; more so than Clara, on whose brow rests a dark cloud. Richards has evidently lost flash. Know you the cause? Time must tell. Now, once more to my negroes.

10 o'clock, A. M.

The steamboat has taken in her wood. My guests and the captain are engaged in their *dejeuner à la fourchette*; Mr. Granby and myself are among our negroes, to whom I give various orders. I recommend—to guard against fire, to "allow no one, under a heavy penalty, to smoke in the cotton press; to admit no strange negroes to the camp during my absence, and to observe closely, even in day time, every corner. The keys to the store-rooms, Mr. Granby, will always remain in your possession." I ordered the ten bales pressed to-day, to be forwarded to-morrow, Sunday, by the returning steamer, to the city. "Now, God bless you all! Be diligent, faithful, and obedient, and on our return, you shall be rewarded with an extra feast."

"God bless massa! our beloved massa! Him bless!" cried all with one voice, which, should it not proceed from the heart, is a master-piece of black harmony of sound and deception; but there stands Doughby on the piazza, with Julie's shawl on his arm, Richards, etc. etc. follow. We must part, dear Granby, else Louise will grow impatient. But no, she is in the midst of half-a-dozen black nymphs, whom she also

admonishes and consoles in solemn and matron-like style! There comes Peter with his family, to shake hands with us.

"Peter," she says, "do not drink too much, and think of your family."

And the old Indian looks at her with an eye so penetrating and loving, that one might swear he had been captivated by his mistress. From her, he takes any reproach; he takes her hand and murmurs in a low voice: "May the Great Spirit bless his daughter!"

The power of our (handsome) women over Indians, is wonderful. They adore them—yes, truly, those looks which they hardly venture to raise to them, are looks of adoration.

Here comes Mr. Wright, who also appears, to wish us a happy journey.

At last we are in motion. "Good-bye, Mr. Granby, and all of you! God guard you! Forget not my admonitions—in a few days we will meet again."

"God bless massa! Maum, we be good boys!" sounds the chorus.

We are on board the steamer: the steam roars—the vessel moves—my negroes stand breathless, their piercing eyes resting on me, and their hands folded. While the boat moves from the shore, they evince an expression of grief: "God bless massa, maum!" once more they cry. Louise stands with her arm resting in mine, and her eyes riveted upon the negroes.

"They cause us much sorrow and anxiety, but also pleasure. With our property, we might live at the north without care—might spend our days in ease and plenty. But Providence has placed these black creatures—the children of savage fathers, dragged by avaricious monsters to our country, from the deserts of Africa—in our hands, that we might civilize and educate them. Louise, let us be their father and mother. It is an enviable station, to be father and mother of twenty-five families."

And while we recede from the shore, once more we view our earthly possessions—our huts, our houses, fields, and forests, our negroes and negresses, and a feeling of heartfelt satisfaction is visible in the features of my Louise.

CHAPTER IV.

THE STUMP ORATOR.

I AM so happy, I feel like a young horse just freed from the cart, bounding toward the fragrant pasture. Above us, the hea-

vens in their deep azure, resting on a golden foundation. The air is so elastic, it trembles and glitters before our eyes, exciting our entire being, as if by an electric spark, and replenishing us with new vigor, new life. A beautiful sight is presented by the combined glowing tints of the palmettos and natural forests, extending to the shores. Each succeeding revolution of the machinery, exhibits new beauties. On the left, a forest of peccan-trees, with their light-green foliage, here and there changing to the orange and purple tints, forming the boundary of my possession. On the right, were groups of pawpaws and magnolias—the latter, like lords with coronets on their heads; overlooking the lower vegetable kingdom, their tops rise beautifully above the variegated pawpaws and catalpas, with their hues of red, blue, and gold; the leaves in festoons float like draperies around the majestic natural crowns, and millions of flowers, appearing jewel-like among the leaves, fill the atmosphere with their delicious odor—an odor so voluptuous, that we open our mouths wide to inhale the fresh invigorating breath of an Indian-summer day. While the steamer ascends the bay above the peccan-forest, a patch of a natural forest of cotton-trees and live-oaks appears to pass merrily before our eyes; but so distorted, that on the first sight one might suppose it to be a huge detached rocky bluff, covered with evergreen. The windings of our Red River, now opening a vast, fairy-like view, then shrinking to the most insignificant dimensions, are lovely to behold; they rivet the mind and eye, hurry both with them into the depths of the natural forests, or the whispering grottos of palmettos, and lull us unconsciously to a half-dreaming state, in which we forget ourselves and all around us. In the contemplation of that lovely river scenery, again bearing so imposing a character by the huge masses of forest, passing before us, I had entirely forgotten my companions. Louise reminds me of our not being alone, at the very moment when Doughby interrupts her by the following words:

“By jingo! I did not suspect your Red River—”

“Of being so magnificent a stream, you intended to say, Doughby?”

“Well, magnificent was not exactly the expression which I intended to use. I meant to say—of being so interesting—though no Mississippi.”

“Thank Heaven! it is not; but as lovely a stream as can be found in these United States—just the right width, to

distinguish a cotton-tree from a shrub; it presents not, it is true, that boldness of the Virginia and New-York rivers, but—”

“I’ll not give a fippenny-bit for a stream, that cannot bear the year round steamers of five hundred tons,” replied Doughby; “but your Red River, I hear, carries them as far as the Rapides.”

I nodded, laughing at the concessions of a Mississippi-man, granted to our Red River. Those Mississippi-men are more jealous of the glory of their river than the Imperial Guards of that of the Little Corporal, and regard all other streams of the earth with a glorious contempt; indeed, to compare them with their father Mississippi, is not always advisable.

“I’ll not give a fippenny-bit for a river,” sounded a voice behind us, from a throat exhaling a strong odor of toddy, “that never allows one quietly to enjoy life; but compels one, day and night, like beavers to work and watch at the dams, to prevent land-crabs from digging an aperture, which would offer a favorable opportunity of a passage over to Pensacola.”

The personage who has addressed us thus unceremoniously, is clad in a linen blouse, with a broad leather belt, a straw-hat with half a brim, on his head, and shoes on his feet; a spur on one heel, and a mighty dagger in his girdle, complete the equipments of the stranger. As he stands leaning on his rifle, six feet in height, his wild, fiery eyes evince his desire for a real rough-and-tumble. While he rests motionless, his looks wander over Doughby and myself.

Doughby casts a sharp side-look at the backwoodsman, then, without changing his position, he darts at him the following words:

“You do not mean to insinuate, I presume, that the man who can empty a gill of whisky at a draught, is less powerful than the gill itself. Your Red River is the gill, which our Mississippi swallows, as readily as I can do it myself.”

“But the stomach refuses it, man! The gill is too much!” replied the backwoodsman, happening to be in a good humor.

“Bah! your Red River! I could empty it myself, were the water only better.”

The backwoodsman, at these words, measured Doughby for a few moments from head to foot, and then twisting his head in the peculiar backwoods-fashion, cried to a leather-jacket in his rear:

“Tom! I say; we will squander no more ammunition on that man: he hits the mark twice with a single shot. He breakfasts on the great sea-serpent—of which

the Yankees tell—and empties the Red River at a draught.”

“Let our Red River flow,” he turned to Doughby; “it might cause you a cramp in your stomach.”

A roaring laughter accompanies these words.

“I will let it flow, that Red River of yours,” replied Doughby with dignity, almost graciously. “I will let it flow, that poor devil of a Red River, since it was only created for alligators and *snapping-turtles*.”

“As your Mississippi for the yellow-fever,” laughed the other.

“What is that? Our Mississippi for the yellow fever? I say our Mississippi is good for everything save such numsculls as yourself. Our Mississippi is a good stream, a powerful stream, a fertilizing stream—in a word, the first and best stream of the world.”

“Doughby!” I admonished; “none of your wild-goose chases—don’t forget the presence of Mrs. Doughby and your friends, to whom your attention should be directed.”

“Never forget it, brother,” whispered Doughby; “but I cannot hear my country, or rather, our Mississippi, blasphemed in such a manner.”

I shake my head reprovingly, while he approaches the man of the spur, around whom a number of yelling, laughing, half-horse, and half-alligator countenances have collected, to see the man, who has boasted he could empty the Red River. Every word spoken, is accompanied with a roaring laughter. On deck, a buzz as in a beehive; planters from the Avoyelles, “Rapides,” and Cane River stations, with their wives and daughters; Americans and Creoles, Frenchmen and Spaniards, familiar and unknown faces—by far the more genteel portion of the temporary population; among whom some elegant specimens of ladies are visible, seemingly anxious to keep the backwoodsmen at the greatest possible distance. Several Creoles, on recognizing us, approach and pay their respects with Creole deference. I stand between Louise and Julie; Le Blanc, Bontemps, Devaux, Rillieu, before me; all streaming toward us, evincing their pleasure and joy at seeing us so well, and enjoying the pleasure of our society.

“Doughby, the gentlemen are anxious to make your acquaintance; they are friends of our father-in-law.”

Doughby hears not.

“I suspect you,” he cries to the man with the spur, “of being of that Yankee

breed—a tariff-man; at least, I’ve never heard any one born on this side of Mason and Dixon’s line blaspheming the father of rivers.”

Doughby, thus saying, approaches the man more closely, regarding him with a half angry and half contemptuous look.

“Doughby!” I repeat, “Messrs. Le Blanc, L’Estaing, Rideau, Rillieu, all the gentry desire the pleasure of your acquaintance.”

“*Monsieur Doffby!*” cry the Creoles, “*un petit moment, nous vous saluons.*”

“*Un petit moment,*” reiterates Doughby, “*nous vous saluons aussi.*” I mean instantly. After having hushed that man, I’ll be with you.”

The backwoodsman laughs maliciously; he is surrounded by squatters, hunters, drovers, “*et hoc genus omne.*” The excitement increases; but Doughby’s refusal to abandon their society and join that of the Creoles, has evidently raised him in their estimation. Their marked, and I may almost say, agreeable features, begin to express something like esteem for the man who knows how to value good society, even at the risk of an additional rough-and-tumble.

The spur-man continues in his motionless position, with all the fierce dignity of a challenger, conscious of his strength.

“I repeat,” cries Doughby, “no true American slights Father Mississippi, or Old Hickory.”

“But who has slighted Old Hickory?” replies the spur-man, sharply. “Who would slight Old Hickory? I should soon hush his tongue if any one attempted it.”

“Blows the wind from that quarter?” laughed Doughby, tossing up his head. “I knew you. Think you I would have wasted a word on you, had I had the slightest suspicion of your having hoisted the dirty colors of the Adamsites? I am a true democrat, man; not a bit of an aristocrat. No, no: I’m a son of Old Kentucky,” he cries, exultingly, and graciously stretching forth his monstrous fist to the man, as a pledge of peace.

“From above or below the Falls?” is the laconic question of the backwoodsman, giving his hand no less graciously, but with more earnestness, while his other arm still rests on his rifle.

“From Cumberland Bend, from below the Falls,” replied Doughby.

“From Cumberland Bend!” cries the man, “then you must know Dick Blows?”

“I ought to know the neighbor of my mother’s son, living not fifteen miles from my mother’s roof.”

"Then you are wild Ralph, as you are styled by the neighborhood fifty miles around!" cries the spur-man, seizing Ralph's hand with much emotion. "What! have you forgotten Ben Blows?"

"Ben Blows!" sings Doughby. "Ben Blows! Is it really you? Do my eyes behold Ben Blows, the bear slayer? What northeaster brings you down to Louisiana, Ben Blows? I thought you were yonder, at Colonel Austin's settlement, in Texas. Ah, Ben Blows!"

"I am a Louisiana man, Ralph, between Red River and Monroe-town, Ralph! I showed it, Ralph! on taking the part of the Red River. What else would it have been to me? but as a half Red River man, it would have been unpatriotic in me not to defend it."

This new patriotic feature is a true one, one deeply impressed on our national character. Our patriotism is first of all directed to the spot of ground which we inhabit—we allow none to attack it; it is the nearest and dearest to our hearts of all God's creation;—next to it, at its proper distance, the county fortunate enough to number us among its inhabitants; farther back, the State which we inhabit, and at last embracing the whole, the broad Union, over which our patriotic ardor is very faintly diffused.

"And did you believe," now cried Ben Blows, "that I did not recognize you! that I would have pocketed your bold insolence, had I not known my man? May Lynch law seize me, if I had borne with you else!"

"I tell you," again cries Doughby, "long before we landed at my brother's plantation, I noticed you particularly; you seemed to be the man, but again I thought myself mistaken; now I rejoice at finding you to be the real wild Ben, and at meeting old friends and fellow county-members. Ben Blows, I am happy to see you."

The scene now grows somewhat moving and tender; Ben Blows holds Doughby's hand in his own, rolling his owl-like eyes triumphantly over the group; Doughby, no less moved, holds Ben with his left hand by the shoulder, though an attentive observer might behold a strong trait of Kentucky irony playing round his lips.

Now Julie becomes the matter of conversation, and doubtless she will be honored with an introduction to horrible Ben Blows and company. Louise seems to give way to similar thoughts, for she eagerly addresses Bontemps and L'Estaing,

friends of the family—who at the same moment call:

"Mr. Doughby, for one moment, if you please!"

"Instantly," replies Doughby. "I tell you," he continues to Ben Blows, "I am happy to see you, and to hear how it stands in our part of the country, and what people say of Old Hickory."

"What else but good, can be said of Old Hickory? I'd like to see the man, who should speak against him!"

"True, Blows," replied Doughby, with dignity; "but you know, as well as myself, that he is not *universally* popular."

"And what do they say?" asked Ben Blows.

"More than I can repeat," replied Doughby; "although their talk influences me neither one way nor the other. Old Hickory stands in his own shoes!" said Doughby, with the dignity of a judge.

"I am glad to hear it, captain," replied Ben Blows.

"Major Doughby, Ben Blows; Major Doughby, of New-Feliciana county. It is Major Doughby, of New-Feliciana, that tells you, and you may repeat it; Old Hickory stands well—has a good stand. How could he have any other than a good stand? A good stand, did I say?—a noble stand; a magnificent stand, has that Old Hickory. I tell you, the stand of Old Hickory is always good; a good solid stand—he always stands ready in his shoes; no matter whether opposite red-coats, or red-skins, he knocks them all down."

"Let us see the result of that charge," said I to Richards; "he resumes his broad backwoods jargon."

"You'll soon know," whispered Richards to me—"he's a cunning dog."

"Nonsense! One of his usual effusions."

But Richards shakes his head, and appears concerned.

In the meantime, several planters of the middle stations approach, who have hitherto stood at a distance.

"Decided then, Major Doughby?" inquires Captain Johns.

"How are you, Captain Johns?" cries Doughby; "very happy to see you, Captain Johns. Decided, you ask? Can you still doubt, whether the enlightened West, the Old Dominion, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and so on, will still allow themselves to be humbugged by the frozen Yankees? I tell you, the West, as long as it is united, is master of the Union; before it, every banner must fall. Decided, you ask?" cried Doughby, seizing his

pocket-book from his pocket, opening it hastily, and producing a number of printed tickets—"decided, you ask?" he cries triumphantly. "I'll tell you whether it's decided: New-York gives him two-thirds, say twenty-four; Pennsylvania her entire *general ticket*, twenty-eight votes; Virginia twenty-four; North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama are for him; I tell you, a splendid, mighty, immense majority. The enemy is beaten."

"Victory!" roar thirty voices.

"It is decided," continued Doughby, with the gravity of a speaker of the House of Representatives; "Old Hickory has carried the day—the hero of the West has gained the victory! But, men, fellow-citizens, and friends! the victory is splendid, I say—a glorious, a beautiful victory! but what of it!—what of a victory ever so glorious, if in it I have no share? What is it to Louisiana, since she did not contribute to its achievement? Can our Louisiana claim any of the spoils, I ask you? Answer me, men, citizens, and friends!"

And the men, citizens, and friends regarded the speaker with wide and glowing eyes, betraying a desire for the spoils; but all remained silent.

Doughby continued:

"Victory can only make our hearts rejoice, when we have aided in its achievement: we can only have claims on the spoils, by having taken a part in wresting them from the enemy!"

"That's our opinion!" cry ten voices.

"Go on, major!" cry ten others.

"Let us hear how the spoils are to be earned," cries a third portion.

"That's the language of true democrats!" affirmed Doughby, solemnly raising his hand. "I tell you, our Louisiana has equal claims to the spoils with old New-York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and the Old Dominion in the bargain. The trophies are as desirable for us, as for them. Louisiana, I say, is the emporium of western trade, the crown of the West; but no longer must she be attached to the chariot of federalism. Let her raise her own banner—the democratic, the only true banner!"

"Raise her own banner—the true, the democratic banner!" scream the majority.

"No federalists!" others cry.

"Down with the federalists—the blue-ights!" roars a third party.

"A curse on the aristocratic federalists!" is the unanimous conclusion.

"Spoken as enlightened citizens of the southwest should speak," affirmed Doughby. "Major Doughby," says General

Forbes, "a few days since, major, our Louisiana acted imprudently. She always holds her elections by districts; thus, no doubt, she will squander her five votes to no purpose, and we shall find ourselves minus our share on the division of the loaves and fishes." "What, general?" I reply, "do you think the west of Louisiana would be silly enough to give her votes for the tariff-men—for those men who fooled the nation, and mixed all the votes of the people into a dough, from which they prepared fat offices for themselves? No, no, General Forbes! They are chiefly Creoles on the Red River; but you'll find Americans among them, who have principles in their stomachs, and detest any infringement on the sovereign rights of the people, and——"

"Right, Major Doughby! We despise the combination of those Johnnys and Harrys, and we'll punish them!" the majority exclaim loudly, interrupting him.

"Just what I expected from thoroughbred Red River men," continued Doughby, with a profound bow. "What I expected," he repeated. "I told it to the general. 'General,' said I, 'thorough men those, our fellow-citizens in the stations on Red River, and above, toward Ouachita; they are no fools, who allow themselves to be cheated out of their rights. They are aware that Old Hickory stands in need of democrats to shape his administration; he wants men, general, who are capable of filling those stations hitherto occupied by the federalists; he wants able fellows for Secretaries of State, of War, of the Navy, of the Treasury—for agents among foreign powers, and among our Indian tribes—for postmasters, collectors and surveyors in our seaport towns. I tell you, such a collectorship, with five thousand dollars per annum, is no bad job; such an ambassadorship to some foreign court, with nine thousand dollars per annum, and nine thousand more for expenses, is not to be sneezed at. And I tell you, all these places were held by the federalists—yes, every one of them!"

"Hang the federalists!" roared all, unanimously.

"Why should not a true democrat have such an ambassadorship?" inquires Ben Blows, much gratified by a full survey of his personal appearance. "I would not give a straw for any other place; I've always felt an itching to see the world."

"Such a situation as Secretary of the Navy, that would be the place for you, Tom, since you spent two years on a whaling voyage in the South Sea, if you could

only manage the goose-quill more adroitly," cried a second Bill or Jack.

"In the Nantucket Polly Trimmings," insisted Tom, good naturedly—"in the Polly Trimmings, of Nantucket—I can tie you a knot, and distinguish between a topsail and royal; and, as regards the quill, some one might be found——"

"Who would set it in motion for you?" interrupted Doughby, without changing a feature.

"That 'll be all right, man," he continues, consolingly—"all right, I warrant."

"I am not difficult to please," replied Tom—"not at all difficult to please, major; you may tell Old Hickory so, if it is worth your while. What do you wish us to do, major? We shall do our duty, and hope Old Hickory will do his, else, by——"

"We 'll hickorize him, so that he wont forget us all his days," interrupted a dozen voices.

"You 'll have no need of that, men," said Doughby—"no need of that. Do your duty, contribute to the victory, and the spoils are yours. Now you have the best opportunity in the world—the very best, I say. The victory is decided, it is true; still Louisiana must share in this victory, in order to merit her share of the spoils. I tell you," he continues, in a confidential tone, "much can yet be done. It is now the eleventh hour, I know; still, much may yet be done: but there are here some ears too many for the news which I am about to communicate; therefore, let us retire to a place where we may raise our council-wigwam more safely. I think it would be a good plan to claim the gentlemen's cabin for our exclusive use, for half an hour; we form the majority, and none can resist us."

"Ay, ay, we are the majority," interrupted many; "the majority decrees—the minority obeys. Come, then, to the gentlemen's cabin."

"Herewith," cried Doughby, "we declare the gentlemen's cabin the head-quarters of our democratic assembly."

"Declare it the head-quarters of our democratic assembly!" is the universal reply.

Already those near the staircase form in marching order; a few words are muttered, and the head of the column puts itself in motion, bowing arrogantly to the Creoles, and then manœuvring toward the stairs, followed, to my astonishment, by the Captains Trumbull, Heath, and Blount; Doughby, with a few planters from the settlement on the Rapides, and Colea's station bringing up the rear. The embryo

demagogue casts a cunning glance at us, whispers something in Julie's ear, and vanishes in the windings of the staircase.

"It appears we have to expect political resolutions, Richards."

"No more than I expected," replied Richards, with suppressed indignation; "the devil never loses a chance; he knows how to turn all to his advantage."

"Pshaw! to what purpose all this array of Kentucky eloquence? The whole is folly."

"You may think so, but I do not; and if he gains nothing else, he shows his party that he neglects no opportunity of acting effectually in their behalf. I have reason to suspect that he has some valuable idea in his head."

"Pshaw! that man forgets, in his eternal Jacksonism, his duty to good society. This vexes me; he never will divest himself of his Kentucky habits."

Richards shook his head, and his entire appearance evinced deep anxiety. Mrs. Houston, who had attentively regarded the proceedings, now joined us.

"I find," continued Richards, "that you but half know your brother-in-law—that you have viewed him only on his mad side. Rest assured, that his wildness, if it was ever natural to him, is so no more; he assumes and rejects it, as may suit his plans, and to influence the Dicks, Jacks, and Toms. I tell you, he is a cunning, bold, and indefatigable devil, with an immense amount of dissimulation. He alone has injured us more than the entire democratic committee."

I shook my head incredulously. "You describe my dear brother-in-law thus?" said I.

"Then you are not aware," continued Richards, "that for the last four weeks he has been one of the delegates of the acting democratic committee—that he is in close communication with Old Hickory, his two adjutants, and the southern and northern counties, as well as with the States of Mississippi and Alabama; and that he daily receives couriers with dispatches?"

"When did he acquire such mighty importance?"

"Important he has always been, through his imperturbable boldness and consummate impudence. He is the man for the middle classes of society. Since his marriage he has also formed connections with the first men, and he knows how to turn acquired advantages to suit his own ends much better than——"

"Better than who?" I replied.

"Than Mr. Howard!" interrupted Mrs.

Houston. "Yes, Mr. Howard, beware of your brother-in-law!"

I cast a sharp glance at the lady, which she made no effort to escape. By degrees we had approached the staircase; Mrs. Houston planted her foot as if to descend.

"Whither shall we proceed, Mrs. Houston?"

"Can you ask such a question? while our opponents are plotting below, in your own county, and before your own eyes?"

"What can he do? Perhaps draw up a few more resolutions, which our meetings daily produce by thousands."

"He is not the man to content himself with mere resolutions—his aim is a higher one," she replied, earnestly. "His eyes betrayed him. Are you sure of all our party?"

"The majority are Creoles; consequently, Anti-Jacksonites."

"Are you sure of the majority?" she repeated, more attentively.

"How can I be? To confess the truth, for six weeks past, I have mingled but little in public affairs—how could I? I was fully occupied with my own."

Mrs. Houston cast a mournful look at Richards.

"See," she murmured, "just as I feared. I should not be surprised if we lost the settlements and western counties; and if he, even at the eleventh hour, gained his point."

"That I can never believe," I answered, to console her.

"Rest assured, he comes equipped with power by the general-committee, and will strike our party a blow, from which it will not easily recover."

"You honor the poor fellow too much, by suspecting him of such far-reaching plans; the cause of his presence is a family festival which my father, according to an old custom, gives to-morrow, the fifth of October."

"We shall soon see," she replied, slowly opening the door to the ladies' saloon.

We could now hear every word. Contrary to our expectations, the greatest order and decorum were preserved in the democratic assembly. Among many voices, we soon distinguished Doughby's.

"Yes, fellow citizens! Democrats! the elective franchise has ever been considered in our republic as a privilege, destined to support the elements of our liberty—deposited in the written compact between the States—in as far as the principles of the candidates correspond to those elements. I think, then, it is hardly incumbent on me, to remind you of the importance of the coming election—an election,

for the purpose of protecting the rights of the people from the selfishness of corrupt politicians—an election, pending between a selfish, ravenous, quarrelsome, and treacherous federalist, mingling in the United States Bank, and adopting the same principle, that the end hallows the means—in a word, John Quincy Adams on the one side, and that pure democrat, earnestly desiring the good of his country, fighting, and beating all for her—Andrew Jackson, on the other."

I laughed heartily. Doughby continued:

"Fellow citizens! We, who consider this election as being of most vital importance, have convoked this honorable body, by the power vested in us, for the purpose of considering the means of promoting said election in every district, township, and county of the Union—and in view of said purpose, propose, immediately to travel over, and cause to be travelled over, the settlements on Red River up to Natchitoches."

"Jackass!" I murmured.

"Travel over, and cause to be travelled over," repeated Doughby, "in order to rally the entire forces by Monday next, the day appointed for the election of a President and Vice President. Is the honorable body unanimous on this proposition?"

"It is."

"Captain Johns, you will note the resolutions."

A pause ensues. Doughby continues:

"In consequence of the above resolution, I, Ralph Doughby, major and delegate of the democratic committee, propose, to send as delegate to Baker's settlement——"

"Mr. Bill Herries," cried Captains Trumbull and Heath.

"Citizen Bill Herries," resumed Doughby, "is proposed to travel over said settlement, and to deliver this letter to James Wrong, who, after two days, will be at his disposal. Are the citizens unanimous?"

"Ay!" responded the assembly.

"I would respectfully remark," replied Bill Herries, "that my cotton and tobacco crops do not agree to the motion."

"The legally assembled majority represents the sovereign nation, and is a law, Mr. Bill Herries, to which you, and your tobacco and cotton crops are subjected."

"Are subjected," reiterated all.

"The majority expects, Mr. Bill Herries, that you will do your duty," continued Doughby, "since you are responsible to the committee. In consideration of said services, you will receive an allowance of three dollars per diem, payable on presenting this draft."

"Captain Johns! take a minute of this resolution."

That is a good joke; Herries gains nine dollars by the excursion, and loses by it three hundred or more. Doughby controls this majority, as Napoleon controlled his guards.

"I further propose to the respectable body of pure democrats, to delegate a faithful and active citizen to the Avoyelles settlement, and toward the Ouachita."

"Mr. Noah Willes, of Avoyelles," cried several.

"I propose Mr. Noah Willes, of Avoyelles; I propose, also, to order him to proceed to the planters, citizens, and settlers, of whatever name, station, or property they may be—always supposing them to be free whites and citizens, entitled to vote—and to admonish said individuals, unflinchingly to appear at the nearest polls, since a single vote may decide our victory!"

"Well said, major!" cried all.

"Neglect not to rap at every bush," added Doughby; "bushes often conceal bears and deer."

"Wolves and panthers, also," laughed some one.

"For them he has his rifle," roared another.

"Silence, gentlemen!" shouted Doughby—"silence! we have not met for amusement's sake. Our object is to promote the welfare of the country, by the next presidential election, and to chastise a party, who recognize the principle that the people must be deceived."

Truly! the fellow speaks as pure and practical democracy, as though it had been his calling for years.

"See, he actually comes as a delegate from the general committee; this hour may be of incalculable importance to our party in the western counties."

Richards, with his ear to the key-hole, beckons silence with his hand, since Doughby's voice is again audible.

"We have, besides, to think of a delegation to the Rapides and Holmes's settlements."

"I propose Mr. Beard, residing between Holmes's and the Rapides," resumed Captain Turnbull.

"Mr. Beard is proposed. Are all unanimous? They are. Mr. Beard, you take upon you herewith the important duty of delegate from a respectable democratic assembly, to arouse the Holmes and Rapides settlements for Monday next, in consideration of three dollars per day. Mr. Beard," he continued, "at the same time, you are

ordered to hand this writing, prepared by the general committee of Louisiana, to Colonel Downright—said writing—"

"What writing is that?" interrupted Ben Blows.

"What dealings has the general committee with a federal?" cried Tom.

"Wherefore the writing?" cried Jack.

"I object to the proceeding!" roars Ben.

"I also!" roars Tom.

"Ditto!" Jack, John, Ben—all.

The entire assembly dislikes the man.

"Colonel Downright is a federalist."

"He wants a new cockade; the old one is soiled."

"Do n't want him; we want no turncoats in our ranks."

The confusion in the democratic assembly increased; the jealousy at the admission of a federalist to participate in the spoils, was evident.

"I tell you," resumed a low voice; "thus it goes; at the eleventh hour these aristocrats and federalists come, and at the twelfth they take the best of the loaves and fishes."

"The loaves and fishes," cry the majority, "they shall not have."

"But the loaves and fishes once satisfied five thousand, as our Bible tells us, and might have sufficed for as many more," argued Doughby, with a low, but piercing voice. "Say what you please, the democratic committee know what they are about, and what their duty is. You declare the man to be a tory, a federalist, a turncoat—well, it may be; I do not know him; I have no desire to make his acquaintance; I love only a true, real democrat; but for the sake of variety, let us also have some turncoats. We live in a free country, and turncoats and weathercocks are necessary."

"Want no turncoats, no political weathercocks."

"You speak like real democrats," replies Doughby, assuming a tone of sincerity—"like real democrats, but not like prudent ones. Prudent democrats never forget that, where the victory is doubtful, inspectors are requisite, who, in case of necessity, are not over-scrupulous in managing the scales." These words the rascal utters in a low voice: "To be a pure democrat, is just as insufficient as mere bravery in a general. Cunning is indispensable in a general; he must often attack the enemy in his flanks—you understand. Downright is a federalist—a man arrived at the eleventh hour; but if we don't choose him, we have no inspector in our favor."

"You are right," cried several voices,

among which we recognized those of Captain Johns, Trumbull, Weatherells, Bawlings and others, men of the strictest *point d'honneur*, who, on the slightest suspicion of any foul play in ordinary affairs, would have taken deadly revenge. But politics is a different matter, and to deceive our fellow-citizens, is among our fashionable amusements.

It may be proper to make a passing remark. In our democracy, many good qualities are certainly to be found; but it would be in vain to seek there for that old virtue, styled sincerity. It is doubtless comprised of many excellent ingredients; but also of envy, deception, ambition and slander, which serve our so-called democratic politicians or demagogues as a rich treat; filling their mouths with the eloquence of false pamphlets, with the most ardent expressions of patriotism, of generosity, and of desire to promote their fellow-citizens' happiness, while they themselves grasp at the fattest morsels, in consideration of their patriotic exertions. Were this state of things restricted to politics alone, it might pass; but as a single sugar-cane, when lacerated by the tooth of a rat, will destroy the whole seed, even so does democracy, with its cunning and deceit, penetrate our entire existence and become a poison, of which the direful effects are deeply and extensively felt.

"Our information," continues Doughby in a low voice, "gives us in Rapides county one hundred and fifty votes; to our opponents, two hundred and fifty; but if we have the inspectors——"

"We shall have a chance, a devilish good chance!" exclaim all, joyously.

"A devilish good chance!" repeats Doughby; "but the less spoken the better. Friends! fellow-citizens! democrats! I furthermore take the liberty of proposing to you, that the respectable gentlemen, Trumbull, Blount and Heath, as representatives and delegates of our political interests, be dispersed instantly over the settlements of the Rapides, Gillard, and Cane River, with orders to traverse said settlements, and to admonish the planters and settlers to repair to the polls on Monday next, the first in the present month of October. I take the liberty of reminding you, that we have to deal only with creatures, who ever prefer balls to polls."

A loud laugh was the reply.

"I further remark to the respected assembly," continued Doughby, "that the leading democratic committee have chartered the steamboat Montezuma; and that said steamboat will ply to-morrow and the next

day between said stations, to carry the electors, and them only, to their destination. Captain Johns, have you taken minutes of the resolutions of the respected assembly?"

"I have, Major Doughby."

"Gentlemen," the latter continued, "we have a glorious chance—a glorious chance, I say. Two-thirds of the votes against us, according to authentic information, and yet an incomparable chance. We are supporters of Jackson, you know—of Jackson, who, with five thousand Tennesseans and Kentuckians, beat fifteen thousand Britons; and we have only to do with Frenchmen and Creoles. The victory is ours if all do their duty. Gentlemen," he continued, in the tone of an admiral, "the Union expects every man to do his duty!"

"We shall do ours!" was audible from several corners.

"But we hope Old Hickory will not forget his own!" cried others.

"Else we will——"

Doughby, almost angry, interrupted them:

"What is that, fellow-citizens—democrats? That is no democratic language—it is mercenary, federalistic, Yankee talk; not the language of warm-blooded Southerners. I tell you, warm-hearted Southerners use no such language!"

"Behold!" whispered Richards to me, "how the cunning dog is about to turn, since he has ensnared them!"

"The rascal has a talent for political intrigues, promising something by way of bait, like a second Van Buren. I am only surprised how he could succeed in enticing those captains, Trumbull, Heath, and Blount. They are three self-satisfied North and South Carolinians, of twice his age and property, and now they degrade themselves by becoming his messengers. He does according to his pleasure with this honorable body."

"See what a brother-in-law you have!" whispered Mrs. Houston to me in a tone of despair. The good lady had participated, at intervals, in the privileges of the key-hole.

"He overreaches you in your own county!" muttered Richards.

"The indiscreet fool!" I said.

"Not so," Mrs. Houston has the justice to remark. "He only does his duty as a citizen, and a member of a party. He takes advantage of any suitable opportunity for the advancement of democratic interests, while our members are too lazy, or consider it beneath their dignity to do so."

"But, Mrs. Houston, what could be done? My head has been so full during the last few weeks."

"Mr. Doughby's head has remained empty," sharply replied the lady, "but the busier were his hands; and notwithstanding, he found time to promote not only the interests of his plantation, but the interests of his party."

The cut was somewhat severe, and I replied in the same strain:

"I can assure you, madam, I felt very well and comfortable in my retirement."

"But," replied the lady bitterly, "you may soon feel very uncomfortable. Oh! that you young men should be blind to the abyss toward which our miserable democracy verges. I see the evil in its whole extent, since I am able to compare the present with the past. Believe me, we have retrograded in many material points, and the thought makes me tremble for the prospects of our native land."

The lady, in speaking thus, became much excited.

"But, madam, what is it you desire? what is to be done?"

"Still something could be done."

"And what?"

"You have heard their plans with regard to Colonel Downright, who pledged his word to us, but appears to have entered into negotiations with the victorious party. His election as ward-inspector should be prevented by all means. This may easily be done, if you inform the Creoles of what you have heard. They are mostly men of property, to whom it must be of the greatest importance that our party, even if conquered at the north, should retain the upper hand among us. Remember, that the society of all slave-holding States must naturally consist of federal-aristocratic elements; and that democratic principles must lead to anarchy, and eventually to monarchy."

This was the deep glance of a woman into the mysteries of our social order. Similar thoughts and fears had often entered my mind, but I had never before heard them so clearly laid down. I regarded her with astonishment; for an instant she appeared to me at once intelligent and beautiful. Yet I shook my head: nothing can be done. Were it a ball, a theatre, a love intrigue, or any other intrigue; a negro-flogging, a chase, or a lasso-party for half-savage oxen or horses, the Creoles might be influenced; but a presidential election—no, no; that would be throwing pearls before swine.

Mrs. Houston is of Scotch blood, and

pursues her object, as a bloodhound pursues his prey.

"The crisis, dear Mr. Howard, is at hand. One word, one firm and manly word, and it will pass by without doing harm. If, of these ten Creoles on deck, each one acts properly at his settlement—"

"It would be insupportable," Richards exclaimed, "if we should allow that fellow to play us such a game."

"It is impossible, absolutely impossible," I replied slowly, but with firm resolution—"absolutely impossible, madam. You know not these Creoles: first become acquainted with them—"

"I know the Creoles of Point Coupée."

"They are different, madam. By a residence of twenty-five years among our countrymen, they have been aroused, and made susceptible of our political life; but these are buried in the deepest political ignorance."

"Good gracious!" cried the lady.

"Howard," said Richards, "you are an indolent being."

And he is somewhat right. A certain indolence overshadows my character; yet after all, it is more a "*laissez aller*," than indolence; and the last six weeks of retirement have taught me to regard many things from a different point of view. With all my patriotism, I cannot see the misery which Mrs. Houston prophesies so closely at hand. In a nation so energetic and enlightened as ours, there always exist antidotes for the poisons of our democracy, of whatever kind they may be. And I must confess, that I do not comprehend the necessity of exposing myself to the reproaches of these Bæotian Frenchmen, or of serving up questions of principle to ignoramuses, whose sole delight rests in the merest absurdities. Besides, the confederates are jealous of the increasing influence of Doughby. That a light Kentuckian, who came among us with half-a-dozen negroes and one thousand dollars, should have risen to an important station in society, and have drawn a prize in the lottery of matrimony, and should now dare to take an active part in politics, makes him odious in their eyes. Patriotic effusions cannot quite conceal jealousy and envy.

While all this crosses my mind, and I deliberate on the ways and means of pacifying both parties—a business reminding me that Shakspeare says, "the devil take one party, and his grandmother the other," the lady suddenly raises her head—Richards's features brighten, something like sounds become audible, and a long dragging noise, like the rustling of silken robes,

accompanied by a light stamping of feet. We hurriedly approach the passage leading to the deck, and there find our ladies, whom we had left with the party.

CHAPTER V.

THE CREOLES.

WE stand speechless—hardly trusting our senses; and all that meets our eyes is so truly Creole-like, so French, that the scene would have diverted us at any other time; but at this moment it becomes very disgusting to Americans, from the contrast. Below us are seated thirty or thirty-five men, of every age and vocation, from the woodsman, hunter, and drover, to the senator; congregated in lawful assembly, and consulting on the welfare of the land. Men, ascending the river from every corner of the State and the Union, hastening homeward to the embrace of their families; hear the voice of a delegate, and at once, home, wives, children, and even money-making are forgotten, to listen to the voice of their country!

"Gracious!" cries Mrs. Houston; "are we really in our native land—in the Union, in Louisiana, on one of our own rivers? Is it a dream or reality? Is it possible for such incredible——?" The sentence remains unfinished, but every feature bespeaks disgust.

"You were right," muttered Richards, inwardly; "with such creatures nothing can be done."

"Nothing can be done!" adds Mrs. Houston, mournfully.

"Tra la la, la la la, la la la, la la la," sounds from Madame Dutang's throat; and then again from Monsieur Rideau's. "Ha ha ha, ha ha, ha ha! 'Tidi ti, di ti!'"

To the sound of this music, the strains of which resemble the cries of our turkeys, Creoles, male and female, whirl, leap, and bound over the deck, astonishing negroes, negresses, and ourselves.

Behold Bontemps, a gentleman of forty-five, in no way remarkable for the symmetry of his limbs; his huge belly, appearing like a moderate kettle-drum, forms a strong contrast to his light sheep-legs; said legs now rise to perform an *entrechât*, then whirl in rapid bounds in a gallopade over the boards of the Alexandria; the amiable Mademoiselle L'Estaing, a beauty of thirty-five, weighing nine stones, is his lovely partner. She and Louise are about to perform—the deuce knows what—while I grit

my teeth with anger. Rideau—dark yellow Rideau, a man of fifty, whose coat-tails à *l'incroyable*, fly behind him like the pennant of a commodore, is her partner. Both turn once, twice, thrice, on their toes, excel themselves, and are rewarded with a roaring "*divine! superbe!*" Julie with D  moiselle Le Vieux, enveloped in floretshawls of blue and red, D  moiselles L'Estaing and Portieux, in others of green and yellow and blue and white, form behind, while Bontemps, Le Vieux, Dutang, L'Estaing, altogether counting two hundred and twenty years, present a sort of tableau: what it is the fools themselves only can explain. Figures succeed each other, all moving to the harmonious voices of Monsieur Rideau and Madame Dutang, who sing from a leaf of music: "Ta ta, ta ta, ta ta, ti ti ta, la la lilli la, lal la, lilli la," and again, "Ha ha hi hi ha, ha ha, hih hi ha."

Monsieur Dufant is *ma  tre de danse*; with the parasol of his lady, he stands beating time with hands and feet, coquetting in spite of gout, dyspepsy and dropsy, destitute as the old fellow is of teeth, hair and marrow. Enough to make one crazy.

Now are we spied by Leblanc, who observes, with the gravity of a judge at the Olympic Games, every movement of the couples.

"*Ma foi, M  sthere de Howard*—have you ever witnessed such grace in Madame Howard? Ah, this *fort au bras*, that noble bearing of the head. And Madame Doffby! M  sthere de Howard, please to observe, how incomparable that gallopade—ah! this *chass   en avant*—incomparable! Bravo! bravo! Truly incomparable!"

Above stands the helmsman, now and then casting a look of the profoundest contempt on these overgrown children; the negroes in the bow of the boat seem amazed at the *ex abrupto* ball. Some of the women already raise their stockingless feet, and assume the positions, in order to present, in like perfection, the *pas* of their masters and mistresses. Suddenly, Louise and Julie catch my eye—both are approaching:

"Dear George! you see we have taken advantage of your absence."

Now the others approach.

"Ah, Madame Houston; ah, M  sthere Howard."

"*Messieurs et Mesdames!*" cry Levreux and Madame Dutang.

"Form the orchestra, messieurs!" roars the *ma  tre de danse*—"il faut finir la figure."

Monsieur Bontemps comes hurriedly toward us,

"Voici, *Misthere Howard*; *eh bien!* You see we have taken advantage of your absence."

"I see! I see! I have heard the same from my wife."

"Ah, *Messieurs les Americains préfèrent la politique à toute autre chose, nous la danse.*"

"But are you aware, dear *Misthere Howard*, of the meaning of the figures?" asked Bontemps, secretly. "At present they are but a faint imitation," he whispers to me—"a mere imitation; but hereafter you'll see them produced at the ball."

"I hope, dear *Howard*, you will promise attendance upon the seventh of October. Papa Menou, and Charles, will be present."

"There you will witness, *Misthere Howard*, the nuptials of Amors and Psyche in perfection. *Mais*," he whispered—"mais c'est entre nous, *Misthere de Howard*, seulement entre nous. Ah!" he continued, nearly in ecstasy, "had you seen on Wednesday eve, the divine, the enchanting *Latrobe*! You know *Latrobe*, who just arrived——"

"From Paris," interrupted Rideau.

"Was chamber-danseuse of the Duchess d'Angouleme," screamed Portier.

"Not so, of the Duchess de Berry," corrected Dutang; "her royal highness has renounced the pleasures of the world."

"Poor lady!" lisped all, mournfully.

"Divine creature!" they instantly exclaimed.

"Had the fortune of seeing her at the Mengs's soirée—a foretaste, a divine foretaste," whispered the good Bontemps.

"Ah! *Misthere Howard*!" he sighed; "Ah, *Latrobe*!"

"Splendid evening!" cry the rest.

Thus they went on for five minutes, at least. None of us could introduce a word; they trip around us as though they were dancing on eggs—shouting, rejoicing, and clapping their hands. Wonderful creatures, those Creoles!

"*Mais*," cries Rideau, finally raising his voice, "*il faut finir la figure; Madame Houston, Monsieur Howard désireront peut-être voir.*"

"Not at all," dryly replies Mrs. Houston.

The Creoles laugh, cast knowing glances at each other, and a look of compassion on poor Mrs. Houston. I finally interrupt their pantomimes with the following words:

"But are you aware that we have also this moment witnessed a dance below?"

"What! a dance?" asked Bontemps.

"Below, in the gentlemen's cabin?" inquires Rideau, producing an *entréchat*.

"By the backwoodsmen?" all burst out in loud laughter.

"In the gentlemen's cabin," I replied, gravely, "and a dance very displeasing to me."

"Ah! that we readily believe, *Misthere Howard*. *Ma foi, les backwoodsmen!*"

"And really, have the backwoodsmen danced?" all inquired, astonished at the audacity of those men.

"I am in earnest, messieurs. Our fellow-citizens, some of whom, you are aware, hold the station of respectable planters, have just produced a dance below, to the tune of Doughby, my brother-in-law, of which I entirely disapprove."

The Creoles regard me with open mouths.

"*Mais, Misthere Doughby, un musicien?*"

"A grand ballet is in rehearsal below, which threatens to excel yours, if effective measures are not taken to prevent the catastrophe."

"*Misthere de Howard* pleases to jest," replies Bontemps, almost offended.

"Messieurs, I would not dare joke with men of your standing. I am fully warranted in saying what I do."

"*Ma foi*," cried the confused Creoles.

"My brother-in-law is a good dancer, and a much better musician; he has just arranged the couples for the great national poll."

"National ball?" repeated the Creoles.

"For the great national poll of Monday next."

"Great national ball: you call it *poll*, dear *Misthere Howard*—*pardon!* we style it *ball*."

"Mesdames!" cry Rideau, Bontemps, and L'Estaing, "have you heard anything of a national ball?"

"Not a word—nothing," they reply.

"*Misthere Howard!*" all scream.

"Have not you received an invitation to the polls, messieurs?"

Joke apart, is a ball really in contemplation?" inquired the Creoles, with growing anxiety.

"What! are you not aware that on Monday——"

"What of Monday?"

"Why, the whole Union resounds, from one end to the other; millions of citizens are in the highest state of excitement; all eyes are turned to the north and the east; and these good people know, see, and hear nothing."

"Well, what of Monday?" again inquired the Creoles.

"Ah!" screamed *Levreux*, who, in the

mean time, has exchanged tender looks with Madame Dutang—"Ah, messieurs, je m'en souviens, savez vous, écoutez, c'est l'affaire avec ces polls, l'élection de nos mandataires pour l'élection du président et vice-président."

"Mâis quelle," commences Bontemps, very much downcast.

"Niaiseries, Niaiseries, Misthere Howard," exclaims Rideau, "how you have terrified us; we really thought a ball was in agitation."

"Ce ne sont que les polls," screamed Porlier. "Qu'est-ce que nous importent ces polls."

"C'est pour nous tout égal," cried Levreux. "Tout égal si Misthere Endems ou Misthere chose, comment s'appelle-t-il? Chose, chose," says Rideau.

"Shekson," supplies Bontemps—"c'est un barbare!"

"Ouin, c'est un barbare!" assured Levreux.

"Un tyran!" L'Estaing.

"Un Kentuckian," Rilieux.

"Who is a barbarian, a tyrant, a Kentuckian?" cries Doughby, who, unnoticed by us, has ascended on deck at the head of his newly-enlisted democratic force. He has heard these words, and considers himself bound to demand an explanation. "Ah, Howard," he whispers joyously to me, "I see you have laid a countermine; by Jove! I'll explode it! Only desire fair play. Who is a barbarian and a tyrant? What connection exists between these honorable titles and a Kentuckian?"

The sudden appearance of the ruffian and company has somewhat dumb-founded the Creoles. They at first dispersed like turkeys, on which buzzards are about to descend, but soon commence anew, on beholding the cold arrogant features of the backwoodsman: the French pride is excited.

"Ah, Misthere de Doughby," Bontemps takes the word; "nous parlons de Misthere chose, chose."

"Misthere Shekson," Rideau again replies.

"They speak of a thing—the thing, Mr. Shekson," Doughby remarked to his democrats, with a look of the most sovereign contempt at the Creoles. "Has anybody ever heard such nonsense?"

"The old chap," cried a dozen voices, "should be favored——"

"And feathered," replied others.

"Not so," says Doughby and several planters; "we live in a free country, and should always remember, that the poor fool only returns what he has received

from others. But, mounshure," turning to Bontemps with a voice of thunder, "allow me to instruct you, concerning the thing which you style 'Shekson.' That thiug, Shekson, has more American blood in the tip of his finger, than your whole body contains; it is major general in these United States, member of Congress, and has been senator, even Governor of Florida. It has been of some service to his country, against the Indians and the English, some important service—to use a very moderate expression. Lastly, allow me to add, that common good breeding demands a different language."

"Mais Misthere de Doffby!" Dutang replies, who generously has joined Bontemps, doubtless to secure to him an honorable retreat.

"Mais mounshure, happy to see you," cries Doughby, with a deceitful smile; "I salute you, and all your countrymen and women; but, as I have mentioned, you should not style that man a thing, to whom you owe your preservation, and that of your wives and daughters, from the murderous claws of your negroes."

"Mais pourtant."

"Yes," continues Doughby, "think of December, 1814, and the first eight days in the month of January, 1815, now fourteen years since. At that time he was no barbarian—ay! when all of you trembled, and ran hither and thither, like young chickens when the mother hen is in trouble. When the tory Pakenham came over with his red mercenaries, you knew not whither to fly. But since then, you have forgotten that the good tories in England dressed a regiment of blacks from Jamaica in red coats, with the humane orders to stir up your negroes, and to aid them in their philanthropic intention of cutting your throats! You have forgotten the generous promise of that same Sir Edward Pakenham, to his mercenaries, to plunder the capital? Ah, messieurs! your memory is short, but that of your ladies is better; they know better how to judge the man. They did not style him barbarian, but strewed his path with flowers—embraced him, spite his gray beard, straight hair and wrinkles, and led him triumphantly to the capital, which he alone had delivered from a terrible enemy, by immense activity, bravery, perseverance, energy and courage! Honor be to the Creole ladies, who acknowledge merit. I know them, for I have the good fortune of calling one of them 'my wife!'"

"Hurrah for the Creole ladies!" cry all the democrats,

The Creoles have evidently been thrown off their guard, by the sudden turn which Doughby knows how to give his attack; while the flattered ladies approach and begin to eye the man more closely through their glasses. Fiery looks from their sparkling black eyes fly toward him, and as he thus stands, his eye beaming with high satisfaction, and resting upon Julie, he creates a peculiar interest by means of his Kentucky eloquence. He resembles a conqueror; his imposing form, dilated by the interest which he inspires, makes him appear a truly handsome man. I myself behold him in a new light; I see he belongs to the school in which those great men, Clay, Patrick Henry, and others, were trained to be orators and statesmen—that school seems personified in Doughby. He is to me a different, a new man.

"*Mais Misthere Doughby,*" replies Rideau, on his part; "*nous ne voulionz pas dire; de grace, nous disions.*"

Doughby stands in anticipation of coming events, fixing his eye, like a judge on the stammering criminal.

"You wished to say nothing," he repeated, "nothing but what the Yankees said above—not so?"

"*Oui, oui, c'est la chose.*"

"Then please to allow me to make a few comments on the Yankee text. Mark well those saucy Yankees, or rather, the sons of those Yankees, who, having fought bravely against the Britons in the Revolutionary war, became in the period intervening between '83 and 1812, so enlightened, that they resolved to carry on the war of 1812 in an entirely different manner. They thought of conquering the English by their commerce and manufactures; and to resist British arrogance, by Yankee manners, but not by arms. Thus the declaration of war in 1812 was odious to them—and they refused to furnish troops, and to a certain degree became allies of the English. While you here lived in terror and fear, the blue-lights of Connecticut, the Evening Post men of New-York, the Websters and the Dwights were the best friends of the Britons, and lighted blue flames on the Connecticut and Thames rivers, for the purpose of advising their allies, whenever the enemy, blockaded by them, attempted to force a passage. These heroes also intended to separate the six New-England states from the Union. You will not wonder at the hatred with which those same Yankees regard the general, who beat their allies, the English; those Yankees would have been delighted to see your Louisiana in rebellion, by the

aid of the Jamaica blacks, and at beholding your throats cut by your negroes—the more, since those Yankees are pious and philanthropic abolitionists. Messieurs! the Yankees have, or believe they have, cause to hate our gallant general; but surely he has not deserved thus to be treated by you."

"Bravo! bravo!" resounded on every side, and I myself joined the chorus, and, more than all, Mrs. Houston. However, the masterly exposition seems to have found but little admiration among the Creoles—they gape.

"*Mais pourtant cette affaire avec les six milices—on rencontre à Nouvelle-Orleans de scandaleuses, d'horribles—*"

"They exhibit," supplies Doughby, "scandalous, horrible handbills in the capital—is it not so? And you take them, with their elucidating text, as sacred truth."

"Steward!" he cries to a listening mulatto, "run to my state-room, and bring two bundles of papers, from my table. I'll show you those pictures, and find opportunity to present the man to you, in his worst light. Yes, that we will, gentlemen," turning to the democrats; "he who, like the general, places his lamp upon, and not under his bushel, shall be illuminated on every side; the people, the nation shall and must know him, the first of their officers, and the first of their servants.

"Steward, hand here the bundles. Gentlemen, you know them. Messieurs, you shall see those handbills, those horrible, scandalous caricatures, which terrify you so much. All that they say of the man, the utterings of that venomous imp of Cincinnati, and that dirty democrat of Philadelphia, you shall see, hear, and read—if you have the ability," he added, in a contemptuous undertone.

Thus speaking, he proudly takes one of the packages from the steward, cuts the fastening thread, and disperses the pictures, as the schoolmaster divides the primers among his anxious scholars.

"I see," he says, in a careless tone, "you heard the peals of the bell, without knowing its locality! Messieurs, we will aid your memory and furnish you with the necessary materials, should you ever be desirous of writing a history of these United States!"

With folded arms, he steps back, commencing a cursory, unimportant conversation with his democrats.

In the meantime, the Creoles attentively examine the woodcuts on the large sheets, and read their devices, such as:

"*Account of some of the bloody deeds of*

General Jackson, with the resolution of Mr. Sloane, of Ohio, etc. etc."

At the top, kneel six militiamen, their eyes bound, behind their coffins; before them, nine of their fellow-soldiers—the commanding officer, with a flaming tongue, shouting forth the word *fire!* below, a poor devil, John Woods, forwarded to the other world in consequence of disobedience; at the right hand Charles Dickenson, Esq., Jackson before him, firing a pistol, with the cry, "I'll have your heart's blood!" further below, poor Neil Cameron—all, true to life, and prepared in woodcuts for the spiritual food and instruction of the people, by their northern friends. The manœuvre of Doughby might, under other circumstances, be considered one of the best ever attempted; the artifice, for the purpose of changing the vote of an enlightened people, well acquainted with the proceedings of the often argued case, and acquainted with them in all their stages, is too glaring; even Mrs. Houston feels the baseness of the farce, performed on a man who bravely fought and bled for his country, while his opponents leagued themselves with the enemy. She and Richards turn their eyes from the disgusting pictures. Doughby stands as a defender of the good cause, his eye glancing seriously over the groups; a faint smile is sometimes visible in his features.

"Messieurs!" he at length resumes, "you see the aim of the accusations. Six militiamen are arraigned, during his absence at New-Orleans, before a military tribunal at Mobile, found guilty of desertion and conspiracy, and condemned to death; the sentence, being confirmed by the general, they are executed. Thus, John Woods and Neil Cameron were tried, convicted and condemned, by a lawful court. Messieurs, what would you—I say not Napoleon—what would you—what would our great Washington have done, with soldiers who, instead of facing the enemy, go *au diable?*"

Bontemps and L'Estaing take snuff; the rest mutter: "*Mafoi, parbleu, morbleu, fistre!*"

Doughby, stopping for a moment, then taking the second package from the hands of the mulatto, resumed:

"Messieurs, these handbills contain a second, and, if possible, blacker accusation. It is no less than the accusation of the general's having withdrawn the affections of a wife from her husband—of having forcibly taken her from him, and made her *his wife*. He is accused of having enticed the wife of Colonel H—— from the house

of her husband, and of having married her."

"Doughby," I whispered to him, "you have taken hold of a desperate case."

"Messieurs," continued Doughby, "a heavy reproach this, since the sanctity of matrimony, of a social contract, in a certain degree the support of the entire social order, is a solemn fact; nay, it is the very criterion by which we judge the morality of the social community. Messieurs, this case merits closer investigation, and impartial and strict trial. Let us hold this trial, since we have the accusation before us, and judge severely of this misdemeanor, for such it is. First, let us consider the accused party. Who are they, messieurs? Whom do we find? We find, messieurs, a vigorous young man, in the prime of life—a young lawyer, who, even in his fourteenth year, already served his country as a volunteer, was captured by the British, and refused a commission, which they offered him."

"Hear! hear!" from several sides.

"The revolutionary war being ended, the young hero devoted himself to the study of the law. The study of the right is less productive, as to money-making, than that of the wrong, as you well know. Jackson pursued a longer and more honorable course: he became the defender of the innocent and oppressed, the support and anchor of widows and orphans, and thus the object for the admiration of every good and upright man. The fame of his splendid eloquence reaches the ears of Miss N——, who, then a giddy girl, is enamored of a man pursuing such a glorious career. The sweets of love enter his heart also—his heart meets that of the lovely girl. But the parents interfere."

"Doughby, you grow prosaic."

"The parents interfere, and thus speak to their daughter: 'Mr. Jackson has no means: Colonel H——, who offers himself to you, is wealthy.' The daughter is persuaded, and takes Colonel H——. Well," continues Doughby, wiping the sweat from his brow, produced by the description of this love scene—"well, Miss N—— removes to the dwelling of her spouse—in other respects a respectable man, but who could never forget that his Mrs., when a Miss, had favored Jackson. She is made to feel this—her delicacy is wounded—he becomes irritated—she is ill-treated. In her indignation, she leaves his residence, and seeks shelter with her parents. Mark well, *her parents*," utters Doughby, with a loud voice. "She has renounced all intercourse with Jackson since her marriage;

but Jackson, with true love in his heart, hears of her flight. He hears, and orders his horse."

"Doughby," I whisper, "again very prosaic."

"Curse your prosaic!" mutters Doughby. "He orders his horse, and flies to the house of the parents. There he casts himself at the feet of Mrs. H—, and says: 'Madam, I am entirely at your disposal—command my services.' She raises him, and he embraces her, offering her his hand, at the same time conjuring her to forget that inhuman H—. Old love, you know, never fades; but she—wavers. 'What!' he cries, 'shall the noblest, and best of her sex be treated thus? no, no! I will revenge her! I will call H—, to an account!' And she, moved by such love, is at last decided, and he ejaculates: 'Behold, my arms are open to you!'"

Doughby actually spread out his arms, his wooden pathos increases, but evidently he has no poetic talent. He continues:

"She wavers—'Come to my arms!' he exclaims—and again he opens his arms—'Come to my arms! be my wife! I will be a husband, a faithful husband to you. Let the conjugal tie bind us! let us be husband and wife!' And she, moved by his love, agrees, and they are joined in matrimony—messieurs, in matrimony, I say, but not legally, and there's the rub.

"Tender, heartfelt love—first love, had led the lovers to a rash step, which they should have avoided. They should," continues Doughby, in a heavy dull tone, "have awaited a divorce from Colonel H—; and by not doing this, they have erred. However, they improved their error somewhat, since Mr. Jackson immediately took steps for the dissolution of the former conjugal tie of his lady. How a man of foresight could ever have committed the error, we cannot imagine. But, messieurs, Mr. Jackson was a hot-blooded Southerner; had Mr. Jackson been one of your icy, cold, and sour Yankees, it never would have taken place; but, as I mentioned, he was a hot-blooded, true-hearted Southerner, who could tolerate no wrong; a gallant defender of the ladies, of innocence; that was his crime—that his sin. Messieurs, let him who considers himself pure, who is unconscious of a single sin, let him cast the first stone at him."

"Doughby, that is not so bad, but in this point it will be difficult to clear your hero."

Doughby casts a cunning glance at me, regards the Creoles with penetrating eyes, and continues:

"There is his crime—there the cause

for those ignominious epithets of adulterers, with which both the transgressors are overwhelmed in every newspaper, and pamphlet, out-rending, as with a red-hot tong, the heart of the unhappy woman."

And Doughby opens the packet of woodcuts, and again disperses the precious pictures among the crowd.

"*Ma foi!*" cry the Creoles. "*Mon Dieu! parbleu! morbleu! diable! triste!*" sound from every side.

"Ah, messieurs!" Doughby resumes with a joyful countenance:—"Ah, messieurs! Have we been mistaken, when we confided in your chivalrous, and humane feelings? when we rested in the hope of your breaking out in indignation at the malice that hurled its darts at a weak female, dragging before the public eye the secrets of a family? Will your chivalrous spirits prompt you to take up the gauntlet, cast before you by those vile souls, Hammond and Binns, to revenge the poor sufferer? I see the fire of indignation sparkle in your eyes, you rise as one man—as a huge giant, as a Goliath, to destroy the Philistines with your club!"

"Doughby, 't was the jawbone of an ass."

"Curse your jawbone of an ass! Messieurs, you shall have your revenge; it is in your power to become the avengers of oppressed innocence, to stamp the calumnies of those monsters with the seal of your condemnation. You have a splendid opportunity, messieurs, by proceeding on Monday next, the first Monday of the current month of October, to the polls, and there voting for Jackson, the husband of oppressed innocence! the hero of our country, and of this century. I am assured you will do so. Yes, you will show yourselves not only defenders of innocence, but also prove yourselves vigorous men of the West, citizens of this State, the emporium of western trade, who refuse to be fooled by the Yankees, but who have a judgment of their own; needing no tariff-man, no fickle Adams, no Tappan and ebony-man; no strife-brewing Clay—pity that he is a Kentuckian—but a free trade man. And a free trade man you have in Jackson, Jackson is the foundation of the principle, a ground pillar, a solid pillar—his administration will be a good, a solid, a beautiful administration."

This eloquent strain flows from his mouth, as the water of the Ouachita to the lake of that name, uninterrupted; I only wonder that he ceases at last. Emotion is visible among the Creoles; not strong, tumultuous, and sudden, but wavering, quarrelsome, and dissatisfied. Bontemps

takes snuff, handing his gold box to Duntang—all take snuff—stuff their nostrils, clear their throats, cough, and are on the verge of opening a discussion. We regard them with expectation. Mrs. Houston is nearly in despair, deeming everything lost: but it was a mere passing breath that excited the Creoles, no lasting flame; their emotion decreases, and they become tranquil; Mrs. Houston is less agitated.

In the mean time we have arrived below Baker's station. From the extensive bay, we enter one of the loveliest bays; immense cotton-trees and live-oaks, intermingled with acacias and bean-trees, appear in park-like groups, forming arches, through which, enigmatical as the future, breaks the distant horizon. Flights of paroquets and mocking-birds enliven the woods, and wild ducks, geese and swans the bay, overhung by weeping-willows and cypress-trees; they rise on our approach, and slowly move in long trains over our heads. The background of the panorama is overshadowed by a blue, transparent veil, woven of the finest vapors; the upper ridge of this veil is illumined by the golden and purple rays of the sun, while the lower strata, resembling enormous satin ribbons, are moved by light zephyrs. As the steamer roars onward, the portentous ribbons rise, like the curtain of a huge temple, and the works of nature and man, hidden by it, present themselves to our view. The first thing that greets our eyes, is an embryo tobacco plantation, and negroes, naked to their waists; at a little distance the old overseer on horseback, with a hat on his head, resembling both a frying-pan and a chapeau-bras. At intervals we hear the sound of his mighty whip. We enter on a bend, and behold the planter's dwelling, and while we hurry onward toward the thing, and the thing creeps toward us—since house one can hardly style it—it takes some little persuasion, to convince us that it is not some Mexican idol on all-fours. It is a kind of Chinese bird-cage, only void of the bright colors; but it is nearly square, resting on eight pillars, like an ugly Mexican idol, and even resembling it by the dirty color of its cypress-logs. The roof hangs down on all sides, like the brim of an old formless hat; but a lovely child stands on the piazza. All appears so strange and exotic: this wooden hut, with its bars, in place of windows, the dark walls of cypress-logs lined with tillandsea—all this is not an American, but a Mexican landscape.

Louise and myself stand buried in the contemplation of the magnificent scenery,

when Rideau's shrieking voice reaches our ears:

"Ah, Mithere de Doffby! wone firm government you say we shall haff!"

"So you shall, messieurs," said Doughby, "firm as rocks, as the general himself, who never yielded, never will yield."

A pause ensues; we look round. The political conflict does not appear settled; the Creoles seem to gather strength; their champion, Monsieur Rideau, a sugar planter of Cane River station, stands opposite to Doughby: at his side, as seconds, all the Creoles, male and female; the former uttering *parbleu*, *morbleu*, *diantre*, etc., etc., the latter, the air of the ballet. He is a thin withered Creole, with a face, coffee-colored on a bottle-green ground, small brown eyes, low forehead and angry features. Impatiently he moves back and forward, though at a respectful distance from Doughby, who grows more and more excited, but continues, with his democrats, to eye the man in silent expectation. The latter still seems undecided; but the view of the plantations on Baker's station, rising up before us, evidently encourages him.

"Ah, Mithere Doughby!" commences the little Creole, in a half Creole, half French tone—"ah, Mithere Doughby, you say we shall haff one firm government; *plut au Dieu!* that haff said many before you; and yet we haff not had one firm government, and never shall haff."

"*Parbleu!*"

"*Diantre!*"

"*Fistre!*"

All these exclamations succeeded each other, from the toothless mouths of the Creoles.

"What! we have had no firm government? What the deuce then do you mean by a firm government?" Doughby asked the Creoles. "What do you call a firm government? If we have not one, what nation has? Where can you find more quiet, order, and personal safety, as well as security of property and commerce, than with us?"

The little Creole is somewhat astonished at this reply; however, the impatient looks of his friends animate him to continue the conflict:

"Ah, Mithere Doughby, I mean not the commerce and property, but I mean—we mean—yes, we haff the honor of assuring you, on parole, that we shall haff no firm government. We haff been deceived too often, so that now we despair of having a firm government, or a firm administration, as you call it."

The turn which the political debate as-

sumes is novel, and the movements of the Creole betray a peculiar emotion.

"What is his idea of a firm government?" is the question of Mrs. Houston and Richards.

"That is more easy to ask than to answer; these men have a peculiar turn of mind."

"*Ma foi!*" screamed the little man, working with hands and feet—"ma foi! the American shentelmen want no firm government, because they want no quiet; they can have no firm government—always must have a change, parbleu!"

"What!" cries Doughby, "we want no firm government? we can bear no quiet? And does that come from you, Creoles? from Frenchmen to us, who have always had one and the same government, without the least disorder or confusion? Your boasted Frenchmen killed off a quarter of a dozen emperors and kings, first adoring them as the heathens do their idols, and then decapitating them; breaking their oaths of allegiance, and changing their governments as they change their dresses! By Jove! that is too much!" turning to us and the democrats.

"Mr. Doughby! Major Doughby!" was heard from several quarters, "let the man make his speech. He is a citizen; let him go on: hear him."

"The little Creole, regarding the speakers for a moment, is evidently astonished; but his sparkling eyes evince his malice, increased by the challenge:

"Ah! Misthere Howard! Misthere Doughby! shentelmen, pardon! We not mean the poor Louis Seize, nor the grand empereur; non, non—we talk not of him; but we mean," he screams louder, "something else—another quiet we want—another firm government. Ah! the shentelmen in America *sont une grande nation*, but they give no quiet, no peace, either by day or night; all they turn bottom upward—always they improve—always in motion—never stay in one place. They always hurly-burly—allow themselves no time to eat or drink; they all swallow entire, fish, roast-meat, potatoes, chickens, and ducks; and then jump up from table, and off again to politics, and canals, and steamboats, and roads, and Adams, and Sheksons."

"You are out of order," remarked a planter.

"Eat and drink as you please, and allow us to do the same, as long as we pay for our meals; our manner is nothing to you," cried a second.

"Stick to your political principles," cries Captain Trumbull to the Creoles.

"Keep in order," utters another.

The little man grows more and more furious, and resembles a monkey, beholding his image in a mirror. He trembles with rage; hands and feet are in motion; his gall is boiling within him.

"Ah! the American shentelmen," he cries to his compatriots, "may say what they please, they are uneasy shentelmen, give no peace, and we desire peace, and can have none—it grows worse with every day; plague, trouble, and care, succeed each other. Then they come calling us to a meeting; 'must have a new road,' they say, 'from Alexandria to Natchitoches.' 'Well,' we reply, 'here is money, make the road; our negroes shall help, although our ancestors, who were surely no drones, did without the road to Natchitoches.' We furnish money and negroes for the construction of the road to Natchitoches. The road is not completed, before another meeting is called, and the American shentelmen say, 'The road must be extended to the Sabine. *Au diable!* with the Sabine!' say we, 'what do we want on the Sabine, the dwelling of prairie dogs and bears, and wild Indians?' 'Without it,' they say, 'the Missourimen will monopolize the whole trade with Mexico and Santa-Fé.' 'Well,' we say, 'leave us at rest, and we will extend the road to the Sabine.' The road is barely laid out, and again they come: 'The road must extend over to Nacogdoches.' '*Peste!*' we say, 'what has Nacogdoches to do with the Mexican tour?' 'Of what use,' they say, 'is the road to the Sabine, if we have none between the Sabine and Nacogdoches? You must take shares in that road.' Well, we take shares to have peace. Now we believe to be left at rest. Rest? *Sacré Fistre! Morbleu!* Have no rest, messieurs. The project of the road to Nacogdoches is hardly exploded, before something else is brought up. The rapids interrupt the navigation on the Red River—must have a canal, as the Yankees have at Louisville. 'What!' we say, 'shentelmen, a canal? Now be reasonable, shentelmen; we have had no canal these hundred years, and, thank God, have still lived.' Were a canal necessary, *le bon Dieu* would have certainly created one. *Parbleu!* They laugh and deride us; they say, 'We must have the canal, our commerce suffers, and navigation suffers, and heaven only knows what else besides.'"

The little man had put himself out of breath, more by his peculiar gesture, than the vehemence of his language. He paused, exhausted. Next to me I heard a low murmur, and a gritting of teeth, and

perceived Mrs. Houston—who, pale with anger, her face turned, affected to regard the magical horizon; next to her stood Richards, involuntarily clinching his fists. The democrats, with Doughby, stood breathless as marble statues, with grave and downcast looks.

We had approached the centre of Baker's settlement, and the steamer was now rounding at a plantation, of which the immeasurable cotton-fields stretched far into the interior, to a forest of live-oaks.

The Creole continued his half English, half French jargon, with a loud voice:

"Well, we take shares in the canal, at last to haff rest. Rest! *Diable!* When haff you heard that shentelmen in America were at rest. They want new dams on the Red River; they want churches, and market-halls in Alexandria, Natchitoches, and Heaven knows where; they want money—and always money for their improvements; they would squander millions, if they had them; and we must always give, incessantly give, and haff no rest. *Diable!* we say we want rest; but the shentelmen know of no rest—no rest under this government!" he screams, clinching his fist. "Hardly have we returned from the meeting concerning the roads, dams and canals, and changed our dress, when in comes the constable: 'Messieurs for the grand jury, petit-jury.' '*Au diable!* with the jury! Why do we pay judges, if we have to bother with *les fripons*? What are quarter-sessions to us? But no help: off we must go to the jury or we shall be fined; for twenty-four hours we are kept over a jug of water, if it happens to please a shentelman to be *entêté*. Ah! Monsieur Dutang, you remember the December session of last year, where we were on the jury, and had to neglect the ball at Monsieur Levreux's. Already some new plague or other, caused by their infernal *self-government*, as they call it—infernal government, that allows neither us nor our families to rest in peace; that compels us for ever to be on the alert, and give away our money at the mandate 'public good!' '*Au diable!* with the public good! What is it to us, that public good? Let each one care for his own good; let us keep our money and not spend it for others; let us spend it for our *plaisir*, and not for the *bon plaisir* of others. They laugh when we speak thus! Their *bon plaisir* is the public good; their improvements—they are in their heads night and day. We speak to them of theatres and balls; they have neither eyes nor ears for anything but their public good, and their improvements; they sound their

praises night and day. What is the public good to us, we say? 'Give us the public good!' cry they; 'and we are content with a clean shirt in summer, a coat in winter, and a robe for our ladies!' I wish the devil had their public good, their improvements, and self-government, which cause us such abundance of care, as to forbid proper attention to our own personal good. A pest on their eternal changes and improvements—it is disorder and disquiet for ever! If I have a good and comfortable dwelling, why should I tear it down, because my neighbor has one better? Ah! messieurs!" turning to his compatriots; "*on appelle ces, gentilhommes, mon sans raison des ames diaboliques.*"

A loud laugh is heard among the Creoles; growing more loud and impatient, they raise the cries of their "bravos" to an unpleasant height; and now loudly clap their hands, while the looks of the orator searches the features of the democrats. And as he continues that search, he closes his half-open mouth, the word dies on his tongue, and only a snake-like noise is audible. The backwoodsmen had listened in silence—before them stood Doughby, Trumbull, Heath, and Blount, forming, as it were, a rampart for the Creoles. In a dense mass, they listened with the same breathless silence with which strict Methodists attend the thunderings of their preacher, as he descants on the voice of God and the fall of the first couple, and endeavors, by his efforts, to shape their ideas to the peculiar doctrines of his church—closely, the anxious listeners watch the penetrating glances of the pious denouncer of divine anger, for the purpose of discovering in his features, perhaps, the solution of those enigmatical contradictions.

This, or a similar thought, caused so sudden a commotion among the thirty-six democratic heads, that the speaker seemed to be thrown entirely off his guard. And certainly this sudden raising of these sunburnt and weather-beaten countenances, with their marked, devil-may-care, features, their compressed, satirical lips, and their deeply furrowed brows, was by no means adapted to aid a Creole, in the utmost state of excitement, in resuming a thread once lost. There appeared in these bitter, ironical features, in the eyes projecting from their sockets, something of that fury, approaching the firm determination of going the whole hog, and looking out for a tar-and-feather barrel. They endeavored, it was evident, to master their fury; they hardly trusted their ears, and again looked in

amazement at the man who dared touch, with his calumny, that which they were wont to consider as their dearest treasure. Richards, Mrs. Houston, and myself, had anxiously approached. But as they now survey the man, and gaze calmly at his compatriots, a change becomes visible in their features—a change, filling us with astonishment. First, a light smile of compassion plays contemptuously for a moment around their upturned lips, like the hue that distinguishes the pawpaws and eatapes, before they fade; their faces assume an expression of dignity—of such strange dignity, that we cannot forbear smiling, on contrasting their linsey-woolsey coats, straw hats, and leather suits, with this proud expression. But our smiles vanish, and something like awe creeps over us—awe mingled with respect. Awe mingled with respect! for thirty-six backwoodsmen, with hardly a dozen respectable planters among them? Ay: such is the natural effect of our republican principles. I love not this democracy which places all on a level, equalizing all; yet I cannot despise it, for the more I reflect, the more evident is it to me, that this democracy is necessary to the ultimate grandeur and welfare of our land; that it is democracy *alone*—and there is some proof even in the fragment before me—which in our present phasis develops our entire strength in such various directions; and without it, those wonders of civilization and energy—those canals of three hundred and sixty miles—those splendid cities, hardly a quarter of a century in age; our seas and lakes covered with merchandise; our railways nearly connecting the shores of the Atlantic with those of the Pacific, and daily increasing the civilization in the valley of the Mississippi, would never have been realized. This democracy, so misunderstood by high and low, seeming to many nothing more than a transcendent phantom, is among us a law of necessity; that same democracy unites the population of our land in one homogeneous body; baffled by no impediments, restrained by no regards, it works night and day on the *public good*, and even ennobles our insatiable avarice, by resting it on this honorable basis. It is this democracy which divided the power of an earthly god, snatched it from a single hand, and shivered it into millions of parts, hurling to every individual a splinter of the thunderbolt and a spark of the lightning—each creating myriads of elements destined to become as powerful; it is this democracy, which has caused self-esteem, even majesty, laughable as it may appear

now, though far from laughable in action, to enter our huts. For, remember well! as our country is that portion of the world in which democracy has been developed to its widest extent, so also is it the only country, where it has entirely comprehended and gloriously fulfilled its mission—that of civilizing the most beautiful and the richest portion of the globe. And the secret by which it has been achieved, is the boundless augmentation of the *free agencies*, in opposition to those only acting in bodies. In this secret of individualizing, rests its power of reproduction—in the self-esteem which it conveys to every individual, forming in each man a separate body, a responsible body, with entire freedom of thought and action; whereas, other forms of government merely present fragments of a huge mass, moved by the impulse of a superior, like the plank of a vessel, which has but one destiny: to be trodden under foot—and then cast aside.

Never before had the peculiarity of our democracy, its being and its nature, impressed themselves so vividly on my mind as now, when contrasted with that which I had seen and heard from both parties before me; one the representative of that democracy, and the other of the old regime; the former composed of various elements, partly common, uncouth, and poor, from the woodsman without a shirt to the planter possessing hundreds of thousands, but all joined by the same common tie; while among all shines brightly the consciousness of a free agency—nay, of a majesty, which one seeks in vain in the Creoles. They appeared at that moment like school-boys, who have played some trick on their master, or like monkeys, leaping, bounding, and winking at each other. I must confess, the sight is consoling to me: it reconciles me to many of the darker sides of our democracy, and makes it appear to me more respectable and supportable—for in what country would such language, from such a man, have remained unpunished?

My hurried thoughts are again interrupted by the shrieking voice of Bontemps, leaping, bounding, remonstrating, and gesticulating among the Creoles: suddenly he turns to us, probably to present us with another scene of this highly amusing farce.

“Ah! shentelmen!” he begins: “Monsieur Rideau has spoken from our very hearts—yes, our very hearts!” he repeats, with his watery little eyes. “Ah! shentelmen!” he continued, “you may look upon us as you please, may think as you like, we are in sober earnest—quite so. *Plut au Dieu!* we were under la belle France,

where we should not be derided, but have quiet and ease."

"You are in a free country, monsieur!" cried Captain Johns—"in a free country, and may sell your property if you are dissatisfied with us, and depart for la belle France!"

"Who disturbs you?" inquired Captain Blount.

"Who disturbs us?" clatter the Creoles altogether, as uneasy as young chickens at the approach of the bread-crumbs.

"Let one speak, if you please," said Trumbull.

The Creoles, at this correction, bound back and forth, looking at each other. Dutang advances, with all the dignity and pomposity of a drummer-in-chief. Bontemps turns in a graceful manner toward the ladies, rests his left hand theatrically on his side, and making the suitable gesture with the right, commences in the following manner:

"Who disquiets us, shentelmen? who disquiets us? you ask. *Morbleu!* you dare still to ask—while it is you who disturb us daily, nay, hourly! Are we not daily and hourly bothered with the meetings? Now, meetings for the construction of roads, as Monsieur Rideau has shown; then, for market-halls and canals, and the devil knows what; and anon, town and county meetings. Have we not meetings for the election of constables, sheriff, and coroners? Again, meetings to turn them out, and others in! *Parbleu!* while we resided in *la belle France*, we had nothing to do with all these *niaiseries*. Here eternal meetings to keep the *pauvre* government in order. Order! *Peste!* there is no order, but for ever disorder!"

"Where the deuce have these people conceived their ideas of order?" asks Trumbull of me.

"In the whole country," continues Dutang, "meetings to put in order the *pauvre* government, and tumult, drinking, fighting, and quarrelling, confusion in families, and excitements, to send the old President *au diable*, and to elect a new one, who shall be the *crème de perfection*; yes, messieurs, *crème de perfection*, that's the usual phrase. *Au diable* with their *crème de perfection*! *Crème de Tartare*, it should be. The president, hardly six weeks in office, and again a number have discovered, not motes, but beams in his eyes; they are paraded in every newspaper—another one is sought after, the canvass is opened in every steam-boat and hotel; fighting, drinking, swearing began anew. Ah, messieurs!" cries the Creole maliciously, turning to his comrades,

"you remember when they held up Mither Shefferson. Ah! *c'est un homme de bien, c'est un grand homme, un sage*; a glorious shentelman, has known to protect Louisiana from the great Napoleon, for the United States? How happy we were in the possession of that glorious shentelman. Bah! after a few years he was a *mauvais sujet*, to make room for a Mithere Madereson, and Mr. Madereson is *la crème de perfection* for six weeks, then the old story; Mithere Monroe succeeds, and Mithere Monroe is also discharged to give way for Mithere Eedams, and now they want Mithere Shekson! Always something new and never they are content; continued change and improvement, and at last it appears, that it is *pis aller*," cried the Creole in malicious exultation. "*Morbleu!* why not keep Shefferson, or Madereson, or Eedams, if they are found worthy? Why always a repetition of uproar, disorder, and confusion in the land? And that's what they call *self-governance, self-government!* *Au diable* with that self-government!"

"*Parôle d'honneur!*" cries Bontemps, "this self-government makes us more plague!"

"I wish it were *au diable!*" adds Rieux.

"We want quiet!" replied Bontemps.

"Want quiet, shentelmen!" cried all. "Quiet, comfort—want nothing of your *self-government*—spare us from the polls!"

"*Au diable* with the polls!"

"*Au diable* with the polls!" once more they exclaim to us and to the democrats, horror-struck by these scenes, bounding with an *entréchat*, as if to challenge Doughby and his party; then again retreating, pushing their ladies between themselves and the democrats, and lastly, taking each other's arms, they leap like glorious heroes over the planks on shore, followed by their ladies, who form their rear-guard, granting us, who have stood in silent amazement, the privilege of a last glance at their persons.

These peculiar features exhibit the truth of our position; but one step exists between the sublime and the ridiculous—they bear the impress of both extremes.

CHAPTER VI.

UNCLE SAM AND HIS DEMOCRACY.

A MINUTE passed before we could regain our usual composure, or utter a word. At last Captain Blount broke out:

"By Heaven! have you ever heard the like in your lives?"

"Could we have dreamed of the existence of such creatures in our Union?" cries Heath.

"Worse than Bashkires and Calmucks!" says Johns.

"And Algerines and Tunisians!" roars Trumbull.

"They want rest," says Richards, laughing.

"To return to la belle France," exclaims Doughby.

"We should have retained our Sheffer-son, Maderon, Eedams," observe Beard and Weatherell, contemptuously.

"Be reasonable, shentelmen; what do we want with a road to the Sabine?" screams Brown.

"Wherefore a canal?" cries Brown again.

"What canal? were a canal necessary, the *bon Dieu* would doubtless have created it!"

And again they looked at each other, amazed and astonished at this Creole farce, as I never have seen backwoodsmen appear in my life. But the picture of our proceedings, which the good people held before us, was really striking, taken from an excellent point of view no doubt, but vastly at variance with the ideas and opinions conceived and nourished by the natives! You must know we have a good opinion of ourselves, an excellent, healthy opinion, as Doughby would say; the highest and best opinion in the world.

John Bull has already a pretty good opinion of himself, but it shrinks to the most profound humility in comparison with that of Uncle Sam, who thinks himself a very different man from his *aged* cousin John, and freely utters his self-love in the most impressive words; contending, without the least hesitation, that he is the first, the best, the most enlightened and happiest—in short, a most extraordinary man, whose little finger is worth more than the entire hand of any other; and this he assures you, upon his honor. And this assurance proceeds from his heart; it has been made so often to him by high and low, great and small, young and old, that it has become an article of faith—the only standing article of faith we possess, which we hear in every hut, in every square, and in every street, without the slightest variation, which no one thinks of doubting; the more so, since an attempt at such doubt would produce consequences to one's limbs by no means desirable. And just because this article of faith is so generally known, so unanimously received, the remarks of the Creole have produced an extraordinary sen-

sation among my brawny, energetic, dear democratic fellow-citizens. They appear like the agreeable visages of so many monkeys, to whom a dose of peppered vinegar has been administered. That Uncle Sam should count members among his numerous and widely extended family—members who, having entered it by an unmerited grace of fortune, would then abuse the honor and the blessings of which they partake, wishing themselves back under the yoke of an absolute government, is a phenomenon which they cannot conceive, and which at once confuses the whole train of their ideas. The speakers are important men, men whose interests are closely connected with those of the country; who feel themselves dissatisfied, even in possession of riches, and who give way to their bitter feelings, since our democracy with its bustle and tumultuous motion becomes uncomfortable to them, as the noise of the ruffian, in a tavern, incommodes the weary traveler. For we must confess, our democracy often resembles too much a gang of ruffians, assembled in a tavern, celebrating their nocturnal orgies; and amused as we may be with their wild dances, their songs and shouts, we being accustomed to them from our youth, it is unpleasant for a stranger to hear his chamber resound in the midnight hour with this uproar, and to be thus unceremoniously roused from his first slumber. Indeed, this democracy rouses in a manner often strongly savoring of roughness and familiarity; unpleasant to tender, perfumed, and overpolished nerves. Such beings are those Creoles, notwithstanding their blankets and jackets, dirt and ignorance—their polish is the only heritage which has descended to them from the precious old regime, and of that they are punctiliously careful. These Creoles are ancient coins, some stamped under *Louis Quinze*, others under his superior, but unfortunate successor, and so worn by a long circulation, that they threaten an entire extinction; and thus they prefer to spend their life to the great day of remoulding, in rest and quiet.

In a word, they desire rest, and wish not to share your self-government, which touches them too severely. The twenty-five years spent under that government, have changed the charm of novelty into disgust. They are Frenchmen by blood—Frenchmen, life and soul—Frenchmen, who would rejoice in having liberty as long as she remained unaccompanied by labor and toil; and so long she would be decorated by them, as children decorate their dolls. She would be raised on their pier-

tables, and joyously surrounded by them; but after three days she would pass to a sideboard, and after a week enter the receptacle of rubbish. The plaything has lost its novelty, and creates in them only disgust—they long to return to the *bon vieux temps*. Thus longs the mestizo of the *Tierra Caliente*—transplanted by a benevolent hand from the mephitic depths of Vera Cruz or Campeachy, to the purer atmosphere of Durango or Santa Fé—to return to his hut, to his calabash, and his banana spot, which allow him to divide three hundred and sixty of the three hundred and sixty-five days of the year between his siesta, *el monte*, and his guitar. And thus would you, if settled under the glorious sceptre of a European monarch, long to return to your purely natural height of social principles, finding yourself unable to support the pressure of the dense air and heavy vapor, collected by centuries of stagnant government; and as surely would the subjects of those monarchs, should their equilibrium be shaken by any revolutionary impulse, be eager to return to their accustomed atmosphere, and find themselves unable to bear either the fresh, keen air, or the unaccustomed climate;—for, never forget that liberty, as well as passive obedience, demands a pair of lungs which, in order to be kept from consumption or inactivity, must be trained early to one or the other atmosphere. Some few constitutions may be able to support sudden transitions; but they never agree with entire nations, and only cause convulsions and epileptic paroxysms, threatening their very existence.

No! the great book of the past, and even of the present, shows on every page that the goddess of liberty is not a light, flower-encircled coquette, with which poets and malicious fanatics amuse our senses—the voluptuous beauty, who, in the burst of passion, gives herself up to the first ruffian she encounters. She is a stern *woman*, advanced in years, with a motherly, nay, even a severe countenance; with a cap on her head resembling the southwester of a mariner, and referring less to grace and to elegant manners, than unwearied exertions; a pious dame, averse to folly and play, matron-like, watchful night and day, ever glancing suspiciously around her, guarding her hearth and household, and always conscious of her dignity. Uninvited, she enters your domicile, if in you she beholds the virtues she esteems; but turns her back on you at the instant you heed not her warning voice, but roll the burden of your household on the shoulder

of a hireling. Thus she appears to us, both in reality and in fiction, on every eagle, dollar, and dime, and we think we know her well. Beware of a different painter!

Still, how wonderful are those shadows, originated in ancient Europe, and transmitted to us, still deeply resting on the extensive family of Uncle Sam, in spite of the incessant change and rolling, to which, like poor Sisyphus, he is condemned by our democracy.

“*Servabit odorem testa diu,*”

says the Roman poet, and to us his words have fully applied, although in another sense. Behold, for instance, the Yankee, one of the eldest sons of said Uncle Sam! behold him with his furrowed brow, his cold, gloomy eyes, his severe and compressed lips, which are only opened to praise the Lord in his holy temple, or the sugar, coffee and tea in his little stall; thanking the Lord with odious self-satisfaction—not only in his heart, but also with his lips, that he “*is not as other men,*” but a favored, a chosen being! And in him you have a tolerably faithful picture of the pious fathers of Plymouth, who, if the chronicles be correct, never neglected the good things of this world for those of the next; and of their relatives, the Roundheads, and Puritans, and Cameronians, and other heroes of a kindred sort. But again, those cold, unpleasant features conceal virtues, which you would scarcely expect under their hard and repulsive exterior—virtues which originally propelled him, as on the wings of a bird, to seek a home in the cold, monotonous wilderness of New England, thence over the Alleghany mountains, never resting until he had transformed the wilds of the Great West to a fertile paradise. If, at the present day, you traverse the country west of the Alleghanies, that same country which, less than fifty years ago, was the haunt of bears, wolves and other ferocious beasts, you will find millions of quiet, sober and active citizens, united in States, many of them surpassing in extent, circumstances, and particularly in civilization and in knowledge, the dominions of your European kings: and if you do sometimes meet with pigs and cows wandering carelessly, yet you will find no country in any part of the earth superior in beauty. Railways and roads cross the champain in every direction, and steamers cover the rivers and the lakes. And to your question, ‘Who was the author of all this?’ we answer: ‘The Yankee! of the greater part at least.’ Those Yan-

kees, with their furrowed brows and cold, gloomy eyes, have yet feeling hearts for their fellow-men. These are the men who prepared beautiful Ohio for your residence, so that now Germans, and Englishmen, and Scotchmen, and Frenchmen, reap where they have not sown. Say, whence the riddle?

Glancing from the right shore of the *belle Rivière*,* to the left, you find an entirely different branch of Uncle Sam's family. He is a jovial fellow, still bearing his Indian wars fresh in his memory, and loving *races*, rows, cards, and dice, more than is absolutely necessary; tossing his head, and boasting somewhat of being descended from Old Virginia, who, you are aware, dates her genealogy from a younger son of a noble English race, and consequently looks down somewhat contemptuously on her plebeian brethren, as younger sons of old families are prone to do. His head is less cool than that of his brother Yankee, but his heart also is warmer, and in the right spot. Some seventy years since his ancestors, a number of those sons of Virginia, o'erstepped her present western boundary, in search of discoveries and adventures. At that time, woody darkness lay spread over the entire Ohio and Mississippi. The lowest shores of these endless streams, and of our Red River, were at that time but thinly settled by Frenchmen. When the brave wanderers penetrated deeper into the majestic darkness of the natural forest, and approached the "bloody ground," as the present Kentucky was styled; and heard the wild music of cougars, panthers, bears, and wolves, they were terrified. Still they persevered in the joyous hope of meeting the Ohio; but when they penetrated deeper into the heart of the thicket, without reaching their aim, and suddenly the whoop of the red men sounded in their ears, their courage failed, and horror-struck they fled for their homes. Some seventy years have elapsed since that day, and if now your path lies through the "bloody ground," you almost stumble, I may say, over cities of five and ten thousand inhabitants, in the very midst of those forests which terrified the first adventurers of Virginia in so fearful a manner. Those cities, of hardly twenty years standing, appear as bright and fresh as though they had just left the shop of the mechanic; in them again you meet Irish, and Scotch, and Germans, and French, all of whom here found a hearth and a home, to which they found their way on those same roads and

canals, which caused such grief and pain to our Creoles.

And this is the work of the jovial, and often inconsiderate Kentuckian, notwithstanding his Irish devilry, and his wild, rough-and-tumble habits, and his occasional contempt of his brethren of Uncle Sam's family, when he remembers his trans-Atlantic origin. Nor has the Quaker of Pennsylvania been less energetic. Like his more noisy neighbor, he also has built his log-cabin in the West, and contributed to the establishment and civilization of new republics. The poor and the unfortunate, for whom the bosom of the older States was too narrow, have gone out toward the setting sun, and settled on the banks of glorious rivers, and on the skirts of boundless woods. Uncle Sam seems to have been born to subdue uncultivated nature: he is fond of building, and sowing and planting, but he also is desirous of reaping for himself the fruits of his labor. The fanciful dreams of an all-embracing philanthropy have found no entrance into his brains, since he knows, from experience, that love resembles those waterings which, if extended too far, finally vanish, leaving no trace behind, and that good cosmopolites are usually bad politicians. He is, and desires to be, a good patriot; yet he refuses no foreign material in fabric—rejects no strangers who may knock at his gate. That beautiful *caritas generis humani*, known by name to the Romans, but which the national pride commanded them to suppress, is actually visible in all his actions, unconscious as he is of its existence. And know you the benign fairy, who weaves this beautiful dress for Uncle Sam and his sons, meliorating their stern features, making them bountiful for the present and coming generations, destroying, as it were, the shell of their selfishness, and promoting the development of the sound kernel, inherited from John Bull?—that same English kernel, which the seven-fold shell, by which your Tories surrounded it, alone hindered from germinating? It is the very democracy which you, in your narrow-mindedness, regard as the source of all evil. It is democracy that produces this effect; that transforms Uncle Sam, with all his faults, with all his disagreeable qualities, into such a highly respectable man, as he really is. This is difficult for you to conceive, we admit, since this democracy is a mixture of the most contradictory virtues and evils; at one time close and stingy, allowing its truest friends and its oldest servants to starve; at another, fertilizing entire land-

* The Ohio.

escapes by the overflowing richness of its contents. At one time, it snatches the bread from the mouths of its children, while at another, its love of the whole human race, its *caritas*, embraces the world. There is tenderness in its roughness, benevolence in its austerity; it considers no child of Adam, no matter whether German or French, Irish or Russian, unworthy of its kindness; it forgets the elevated standing to which it has risen, and stretches forth its helping hand to the worm in the abyss. It is that alone which has broken through the seven-fold armor of our cold selfishness, armed millions of mechanical hands with a free will, broken down the curtain concealing the western land from the east, and crossed the Alleghenies, never resting until its dominion was established beyond their range—a dominion, equal in extent to the Roman with its imperial lustre, and which has been gained without a drop of blood—not with the sword, but the axe; which in seventy years, will be inhabited by a hundred millions of free citizens—a monster republic, resting its right foot on the shores of the Atlantic, and its left on the Pacific; sustaining millions of freemen, living under the law of Christ, and speaking the language of Shakspeare and of Milton! That country will be an England, viewed through a solar microscope; an England, raised to the tenth degree of physical and moral cultivation and development!

This is the problem of our democracy, which has already been half solved.

And that democracy you abuse! We can well conceive narrow-minded scholastics and trembling grandees, shaking their heads at the evils which will be its final result to Uncle Sam and the world. Their narrow horizon extends no farther; they measure their democracy by the scale of Athens, the Grecian republics, the Roman plebeians, and the modern sans-culottes—and forget that matter, destructive in a narrow compass, expands advantageously over a wider space—that the gigantic power which in aged Europe necessarily has to be concentrated in a single hand, would destroy our republianism, as the exploding powder destroys the barrel—that our democracy is different, in its nature, from that of the old and crowded world, where it was, and of necessity must be, destructive; while with us it is an invigorating, preserving, and creative power, which, in proportion as it is beneficial to us, will react advantageously on the stormy atmosphere of the other hemisphere.

"Beautiful!" we cry to the brave Weth-

erell and Trumbull, pressing their hands in token of agreement with their words, since the above is the resumé of the reasoning of those worthy men, chiefly of the aged Wetherell, who,

"By discipline of time, made wise,
Has learned to tolerate the infirmities
And faults of others."

Our democrats give nine cheers for Uncle Sam and all true republicans! and while the steamer is rounding to at a bend, a dozen jovial fellows break out into loud laughter, which rapidly spreads, and soon seizes the entire company on board. Blount laughs, and Emily laughs, and Mrs. Houston, and Doughby, and Wetherell laugh, as if to split their sides; and, following their example, Louise and Julie laugh—yet none know the cause of the laughter: a more absurd farce never was enacted.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CREOLES.

"BUT do tell me the cause of this laughter," says Louise to me.

And Mrs. Houston replies, with a grave air:

"It is, dear madam, as you see, an expression produced by surprise, on a sudden perception of something not occupying its appropriate place—which perception is doubtless rendered more acute by the consciousness that there is no danger."

Our northern ladies, you know, delight in playing the *blue-stocking*, for which diversion our fifty or sixty penny magazines readily furnish opportunities; but I had not as yet discovered that predilection in Mrs. Houston. I regarded her, therefore, with not a little astonishment at the Aristotelian definition of the origin of the laughter; but, on glancing at Louise, and beholding her eyes steadfastly fixed on the good lady, as though she had fallen from the clouds, neither she nor myself could control ourselves any longer; her lips separated as if torn asunder, and she and Julie burst forth into peals of laughter, which astonished both old and young.

"Bless us!" cried Mrs. Houston, in an offended tone—but Louise and Julie had escaped. The foolish ladies ran, as though they were pursued, down the stairway to the ladies' saloon, there to give way to their merriment.

The concert commences anew, in all its variations, over the entire gamut—black and white, young and old, large and

small, all laugh. On both shores, male and female Creoles burst from the piazzas, negroes and negresses from their huts, all astonished and staring. Our democrats take a laughing revenge on the farce of the Creoles; scarcely had our ladies vanished, when the general campaign opened.

"No!" cries Doughby, pointing to a group of negro huts, rising like dark-brown ugly toadstools from the ground—"no: it must be a fact, fine people you have here! tell me, for Heaven's sake! what can be the use of these things?"

"Use? *ma foi!*" Blount imitates the Creoles—"Use? *peste* on their improvements! If I inhabit a comfortable dwelling, why should I pull it down, because my neighbor has a better?"

"*Au diable* with their improvements!" cries Captain Johns.

"What is the public good to us?" says Heath.

"But, the deuce, tell me the use of yonder cases? They are too low for a standing man and too high for one lying."

It actually would be difficult to determine the object of these *cases à negres*, negro cases, as they are appropriately styled, did we not behold the poor devils entering them at the moment—it is Sunday. They are formed of cypress logs, twelve feet in length, of which nine are above ground; covered with spars, here called *pieux*, and void of windows, but with an abundance of holes, admitting both two and four-footed creatures.

"These planters' houses with their appendages of *cases à negres*, appear to me," cries Trumbull, "like a number of Dutch boors, with their boys attached to their skirts, whom I met last year in the Rotunda at Washington."

The well-adapted simile produced a loud laugh. The sublime and the ridiculous are closely connected. We landed at the station, and are now again in motion, entering the bay commanding a view of both shores. The landscape appears like an immense park of huge dimensions. For a moment the eye rests on the red surface of the Red River, then gliding over the scene, you would imagine you beheld the courtyard of an imperial palace—the glittering of those majestic forest-walls, those gigantic cotton-trees, and the evergreen oaks, and magnolias, and pecans, forming immense vaults; but in the midst of those walls, and vaults, objects appear, which the gravest individual could not behold without a heartfelt laugh. They are Creole dwellings, with their negro cases appended. "They appear," as Trum-

bull remarks, "like a dozen drunken boors, who, with their broad-brimmed hats on their brows, reel to and fro, and are lost in wonder and amazement, at finding themselves where they are; at their heels are a herd of ragged urchins, holding their inexpressibles with one hand, and the coat skirts of their progenitors with the other."

"Pon my soul!" cries Doughby, "the owners of these cases ought to be made to inhabit them. Only tell me, what becomes of the poor devils of negroes in a storm?"

"Then they hurry," replies Blount, "under the first cotton-tree; and on an increase of the storm they are joined even by their masters; for, as you see, their tenements, with their broad cypress roofs depending to the ground, seem to be constructed for the very purpose of collecting the rain."

"And you cannot imagine," again exclaims Trumbull, "the dampness of our rains in Louisiana, and how they always descend only on Sundays and holydays. *Parole d'honneur!*" he continues mockingly, "always on Sundays and holydays. *Voyez vous!* if we had them on week-days, we should leave all, to fill up the cracks and holes in our roofs and walls, but we dare not work on Sunday. No! we only—dance."

"They appear to me like the British recruits in Montreal and Quebec, who raise and raise their arms and legs, throwing them out and drawing them in, and yet never advance."

"Worse than the Shakers."

Again loud laughter, even at the expense of the poor Shakers. And yet they are a good and harmless race—a strange body, it is true, on which a certain Shoreham or Dane—it would take the memory of Mezzofanti, of Bologna, to remember all the celebrated names that achieved the great work of spiritual regeneration: but the fact is, these good people, at their religious assemblies, dance, or rather shake, to the glory of God. We are latitudinarians on this point, giving and taking freedom of action, and even at the mad bounds of the Methodist, and the noisy spectacles, fiery and frantic, of other sects, we retain our usual dignity; but these Shakers deprive us of our well-merited reputation for composure. None could retain it, on viewing these, often aged people, with their stiff garments and old-fashioned manners, with inexpressible devoutness and decorum divesting themselves of their coats, solemnly raising their feet at the signal from a fiddle, and commencing to hop forward and backward, backward and forward, until they lose

their breath and you your patience—breaking out in a loud laugh at the foolish spectacle, which, in any other country, would doubtless procure them lodgings in a mad-house. With us they are tolerated; we could not be angry at these honest creatures, who—save the circumstance that makes them believe, in the simplicity of their hearts, they may become acceptable in the sight of the Lord by their dancing—are the best creatures in the world! just like the Creoles, who, were it not for their idleness, would not be so bad, but on the contrary, would be as pleasant beings as ever you saw; their laziness even gives them a pleasant air, even seems becoming to them—could you but hear them! How rich the country is! nature seems to have exhausted herself on it. The black soil extends to the depth of eighteen feet, and gives its tribute a hundred fold, nearly without labor; the woods are filled with papaws, persimmons, and peccans, the soil with ground-nuts; so that starvation would be impossible for the good people or their negroes—yet, hear their complaints:

“*Peste!*” they cry: “*Peste* on the ground-nuts in all the fields—*peste* on the papaws, whose roots creep all over the land—*peste* on the evergreens growing higher than the cotton-trees. “*In la belle France,*” said grand-papa, “nothing of that.” *Peste* on the rain, penetrating their ball-rooms. And their balls—what would they be without them? they are their element, their *plaisir*, their *public good*, their *improvements*, the beginning, the end, and the triumph of their civilization. “*Misthere Howard,*” I was doomed to hear a thousand times in the first week after my arrival, “you have not witnessed a Creole ball! Ah! *Misthere Howard*, you have seen nothing of Louisiana!” Now in that I could not agree—I had seen much, so much that I cared not to read any more; for from their daily life no favorable inference could be drawn of the nature and character of those good folks. The men are peaceful subjects, notwithstanding their meagre countenances—retired individuals, who trouble themselves so little about the world and its revolutions, that they do not even desire to read them in the newspapers, since of twenty Creoles eighteen are unable to read. They rarely leave their plantations, and owe their haggard countenances to their negroes, and a too high degree of irritability. Of their devotion to the negroes, they are strongly and justly accused—consequently, they make deplorable husbands. The poor wives are to be pitied in this respect. They

are something like what we should call vixens, and have a manner too tedious and languishing to suit our taste, and a loud, quarrelsome voice, sounding discordant to your ear. But they are real Junos in figure—and in jealousy. Majestic Euphonia, I assure you, is a splendid creature—a pair of eyes sparkle like jewels from beneath her high forehead, with brows and eyelashes which would have been ornaments in Zenobia. She was somewhat pale and indolent, and a light melancholy rested over her entire frame. You could behold nothing more picturesque than this full, luxurious form, with voluptuous lips and eyes, resting in a white dressing-gown, the sofa covered with faded damask, and forming the focus of all your glances, and teaching you to forget the high-backed chair covered with ditto damask, and as old as my great grandfather would be, were he still in the land of the living—together with the little heaps of rubbish, in which now and then rats and mice were seen to exult. At certain moments these circumstances seemed adapted to the whole, and to have been collected and arranged for the occasion, with the view of increasing the magical charm of the Juno-like form. She was the queen of the settlement in spiritual, bodily, and other respects. None entered the bayou—you know the bayou above the settlement—with such infinite grace, amid the cries of her associates none rivalled her in the adroitness with which she dived to the bottom in search of a dollar, or played *Dame Loup* and *sept et trois*, with *mouve sans gêne*. I had made several calls at the plantation, since the lady’s papa had hired some of his negroes to me, and I desired to live on a pleasant neighborly footing with these somewhat singular beings, who evinced a kind of desire to domesticate the *cochou Yankee* with the family. However, all these magical charms produced not the desired effect. But now came the principal attack: the beautiful mouth, with the somewhat voluptuous lips, invited me to a ball, and I, George Howard, accepted the invitation. My expectations of their ball were limited; but already on entering the saloon, I changed my preconceived idea. The saloon was evidently unchanged—cypress walls, lined with lime and tillandsea, a few tallow candles, in the centre a wooden chandelier with six tapers, a couple of negro musicians—but the company was superb, *divine*, as they have it. The crowd of ladies was imposing both by their bearing, grace, and ease, and by the tasteful arrangement of their toilet. Most of them

presented tall, majestic figures, tending toward corpulence, but their pale cheeks were reddened, their splendid raven hair interwoven with roses and pearls, and their languishing air had changed to an eager desire for the dance. An abundance of pearls and diamonds was visible, since, as you know, these oddities, with all their rubbish and dirt, often possess hundreds of thousands; and broken tables could support sufficient silver for erecting in elegant villa.

I was really astonished—they appeared to me like a group of princesses in the hut of a peasant. Euphonia had been appointed my partner, by the *maître des cérémonies*, of which there are always two at any respectable Creole ball. Soon I was hurried onward in the rows of dancers; hurried in a manner which I shall ever remember. It is really interesting, after all, to see those Creoles at a ball; their ardor always kept in the nicest bounds, and the bending of their lovely forms, moving in the most graceful figures. They mingle the quadrille with the cotillon, the allemande, and the polonaise—all with an ease, and taste, which prevent you from returning to your senses, and transport you onward in a sea of delight.

"Perfectly true," cry Blount and Wetherell. "Mr. Howard, we will thank you for the continuation."

Though I had begun with mere meditation, I ended with verbal narration.

"Perfectly correct," they repeat.

Amid this enjoyment we were suddenly terrified by loud strokes at the bars and blinds of the piazza, and the water-drops, penetrating into the saloon, announced a heavy shower.

"*Peste!*" suddenly cried the beautiful figures. "*Fistre! Sacre!*" sounded from every side. Had I bounded on the hottest day of August from my cotton-fields, into the Red River, the change produced on me could not have been more rapid, than that which I experienced at these coarse expressions from the lips of the beauties. "*Peste!*" reiterated the lady of the house. "*Peste!* Have you, Mr. Howard, such cursed rains in Virginia?"

I assured the lady that our rains are more wet, and our houses more dry.

"*Mais,*" she replied—" *mais cela ne vaut pas la peine. Qu'est-ce qu'il y a un peu de pluie! Nous y sommes accoutumées.*"

And I found the correctness of this statement—a half-dozen umbrellas, held by negroes over our heads, prevented the rain from drenching us; and under this double roof, an hour was spent in all sorts

of games. The rain ceased and the dance was resumed.

"Excellent!" cried Blount and Trumbull; "and what were the consequences of the ball?"

I rode home in the morning, and in the afternoon, sent one of my negroes with a note, inquiring after the health of my partner, and her respected mamma and papa. On the third day after, I called on the lady. Having fastened my horse to one of the negro huts, and walked through the camp toward the house, I was suddenly interrupted in my thoughts by a voice, shrieking: "*Sacré, Dieu!*" and on seeking the source of these doleful sounds, I suddenly perceived my beautiful Euphonia; who, whip in hand, plainly showed that she had taken some little exercise on her negress! My astonishment seemed singular to her. This slight discovery cooled the fire—still glimmering in my bosom since the ball—and after having passed the kitchen, in which I caught a glance at the preparations for dinner, I felt the flame was extinct.

"There you are right," join Wetherell, and Blount, and Heath; "to behold a Creole kitchen!"

"I entered the saloon with the beautiful Euphonia. On the damask sofa lay my note among dresses, corsets, and things of that sort. I was struck at her request to read the note to her, since I did not dream of her ignorance of the invention of Cadmus. But when she afterward called the overseer, and again desired me to read, to make sure, as she said, that the letter contained actually all the *bon mots* I had read, it became too much for me, and especially when dinner was announced. Their desire to overwhelm me with the dignity of a Creole family in all its glory, was evident. An abundance of silver plates and goblets, was interspersed with neckless bottles. Behind our chairs, stood negro boys and girls, whose shoulders were decorated with a sort of jacket, trimmed with gold, while the inferior parts had been forgotten; thus the poor creatures, when occasion required them to stoop, or to take a hurried turn, presented a *point de vue*, which deprived me of the last fragment of appetite which the sight of the kitchen had not destroyed. At the same time, I could not help admiring the *sans gêne*, which my honored hosts tolerated in their black Ganymedes and Hebes."

"And what further?"

"My absolute want of appetite gave me an opportunity of securing my retreat, and at the same time of settling my bill with

D——, for the negroes which he had hired to me, and whom I returned the following week. The *bête*, the *Cochou Yankee*, who could resist so many charms, was afterward considered by him unworthy of the honor of a *liaison* with a noble Creole family."

"That I call giving, in a few words, a masterly sketch of Creole amiability."

"It cannot be excelled," cries Wetherell; "just as might be expected. But what would you have said, on beholding the great marquis in his day?"

"The great marquis?"

"Have you never heard of the great marquis?"

"I have heard of barons, counts, etc., since my father-in-law is related to some; but never of a great marquis. You don't mean Cortez?"

"No," laughs Wetherell; "my great marquis was of a different grain. He also desired to found an empire, it is true, but in a peaceable manner; he hated war and deeds of war, but loved the arts of peace."

"Well, then, tell us of the great marquis," exclaim Blount and Johns.

"Let us have something from your treasury of experience, Mr. Wetherell," said Heath and Doughby. "You have resided for about sixty years in Louisiana, and must have gained some experience."

"I have, my friends," replies Wetherell. "I have beheld Natchitoches in all its glory, its thriving, and its lustre; I have witnessed its decay and its downfall. Now, like Troy, it is a heap of ruins; on the vestiges of the splendor of the *ancien régime*, now graze oxen and horses. I have seen more—the foundation of a new empire. I have seen, in the woods of Ouachita, a carriage of state, as beautiful and huge as the mansion of a planter. I have beheld faro-banks, theatres, a court-chapel, court-days and levées, valets and footmen. All this I have seen."

The old man thus speaking, laughed in his peculiar manner. We grew more curious, and indeed more jovial; the great mass had separated into several debating groups; we—Heath, Blount, Trumbull, Richards, and myself formed a nice party. Doughby and Johns divided their attention between us and the democrats. The circumstance that the Creoles had withdrawn, gave to the general hilarity, that tendency to illustrate the peculiarities of the absent, which may be called a venerable custom. Thus, all of us listened more attentively to old Wetherell, who resumed.

"One of those important events forming in itself an epoch, excited the peaceable inhabitants of Natchitoches. You are

aware of the former importance of the city, since all the planters possessing estates in that region, governed them from thence. At first I was astonished at the obstinacy which retained them in that dirty and unpaved city—village we should rather call it—but I soon ascertained its cause, as would also most others who could have beheld it with my eyes. The great military parades on Sunday, and the court levées induced them to bear with all inconveniences, and even the loss of a city residence. It would have amused you to have been present at such a levée, to have viewed the old knight and other persons qualified for court, as they appeared in small clothes, and swords with whalebone blades, styled *excuses*; in faded uniforms, of which many had seen fifty years of service, and dated back their origin to the time of Orleans and laws, and which, of course, increased in value with their age. They proceeded in all dignity from their hotels—for thus they styled the huts which they inhabited—followed by a shoeless and often breechless negro, toward the château of the commandant, in order to swell the train of the representatives of the king moving to church while the bells tolled; and the military force, numbering seventy-five souls, paraded before a miserable shanty, the château of the commandant, and the calaboose. The hearts of the Creoles beat with emotion! After the mass, a solemn presentation of the nobles and their ladies took place. To this very day, the Creoles relate these circumstances with tear-filled eyes. But only those entitled to visit at court, partook of this honor;—about twenty families, descendants from ancient houses, the stockholders of the Mississippi company, and former commandants, who had received donations from the crown—the people, the descendants from Parisians and Frenchmen, who had been imported at the expense of government, were only admitted to general levées with the Acadiens and Illinois. Settlers never entered the château. Ah, *messieurs, alors on connaissait ses gens, et nous autres—nous étions gentils-hommes—notre cour était petite, mais c'était pourtant une cour—mais à présent cette maudite Démocratie—*"

"Ah!" we laugh, "old Wetherell knows well how to act the mimic."

He continued:

"As I mentioned, there were three orders in Natchitoches—the *grandees*, the people—that is, the Parisians, and other Frenchmen and their descendants; and the Acadiens or the rabble, who were fully treated as such. I belonged to neither

order; I was at that time but a lad of nineteen, and worked at the first cotton-gin of the time, a mile below the city. On a Sunday, six months after my arrival, I was disturbed in my cogitations by two cannon-shots—the fort contained six pieces of cannon. Two shots! can it be the Indians? the French generally agree with the savages, but Indians are Indians. I felt uneasy, threw on my coat, and hurried to town. All were in motion. The whole military force was drawn up—the flag at its head, drums in full operation, the grandees in full dress, and all the other inhabitants in their best garments. Flowers were strewn over the distance of half a mile, from the landing to the city. A baldachin stood at the door of the church; the grandees, with the commandant, were assembled in secret consultation in the saloon of the château; now and then a head, covered with a wig, appeared at the window. Expectation was painted on every face. At the entrance to the church stood the priest, in full canonical costume. I questioned one, two, three, but only was answered: ‘He has come—he will come—will be here in one hour—half an hour—two hours.’ ‘Who has come? who will come?’ The man whom I questioned, turned his back on me with astonishment, muttering ‘bek.’ I tried my luck with a second. ‘The great marquis,’ I learned at last; ‘the great marquis,’ exulted the man, ‘will land at Natchitoches, take his residence at Natchitoches, and here open his court.’

“It was the great marquis of Maison Rouge, who had received a donation on the Ouachita, from the Spanish court. It extended over a distance of thirty miles in length, and as many in breadth, nearly down to the Red River. The edge of yonder forest, visible at the termination of the palmetto field, was comprised in his donation. It was a splendid possession, embracing full two millions of acres: a small kingdom of meadows and forests, containing the best part of Upper Louisiana.

“His majesty has granted to him several hundred thousands out of his treasury,” cried a second. ‘He will found a new State,’ said a third. ‘Every family, settling on his land, receives a pension.’ ‘He will form an epoch in Louisiana. Natchitoches will become a second Paris.’ The rejoicing increased.

“I listened and listened, and shook my head. I had heard before of the truly royal gift, of the gracious resolution of the Spanish court, with this marquis to produce a

new era in Louisiana; but I could not be persuaded, that the great marquis would select Natchitoches for his residence, since it lay full one hundred miles out of his way. However, the event gave food to my youthful imagination. On all sides I heard the plans of the good people of Natchitoches, their resolutions to settle in his kingdom, and to live in comfort and ease on the pension. I became thoughtful. I disclosed my views to a young countryman of mine, working with me on the plantation. We had nothing to lose in Natchitoches, nor could we hope to gain much: provisions were abundant, but money was scarce—our contracts were for weeks. In short, on the following day, we bade farewell to Monsieur Mutton, constructed a boat, and joined a family of Acadiens, consisting of a husband and wife and one daughter, resolved to participate in the glory. We sailed down from Red River, up the Ouachita, and fell in with several boats, laden with provisions and other goods for the new capital; we joined them, and were just in time, as we were informed, to view the celebration of the installment of the future monarch in his realm. My expectations were raised.

“At the end of the third week we arrived at the place of our destination. The site of the new settlement had been not badly selected on the left shore of the Ouachita, but my first glance at the future city undeceived me. I expected to see a busy noise, to hear the hum of thousands of beings, engaged in felling trees, constructing roads, erecting forts. Instead of all this, I found a few hundred individuals, collected in a building resembling a large barn. I conceived the people to be engaged in divine service, and we approached the spot; I actually heard the voice of a man, then of a woman, and soon fiddles and flutes. That could not be worship! It was a farce with a ballet—the people were ‘au spectacle.’

“Heavens! thought I to myself, these men waste with nonsense the time which they should spend in the erection of forts.

“Our Acadiens were highly amused; their French nature was aroused: they listened, opening ears and eyes. We two Americans collected our earthly possessions, and, axe in hand, constructed a rude hut, in which we quietly rested during the night.

“At daylight we viewed New Paris, as the people styled their eight or nine huts. All were erected of logs, some larger than others. The chief building, inhabited by the great marquis, was surrounded by a

red gallery, and was possessed of a flight of steps, or rather logs; through the openings of the cypress-walls, paper-hangings; mirrors, and other costly articles, hastily collected, were visible, lending to the whole an appearance more theatrical than real. To me, it resembled the camp of our French allies before New-York, where I assisted, you know, as a volunteer of seventeen. The second of the log-houses, next to the chateau, as it was styled, contained the chiefs of the suite of the new potentate, lords of the bed-chamber, and pages; the third, valets and laqueys; the fourth, coachmen, and so on. One of the buildings was intended for the chaplain; the chapel was opposite the chief building, distinguished by a bell above the roof, protected by four boards from rain and storm. That was the new residence of his excellency, the marquis of Maison-Rouge, as he was styled; the instrument selected to create a new era in Louisiana, and thus to balance the 'Revolutionary States,' as he called them.

"The morrow was the day appointed for the installment of the new monarch. For this purpose the great man had imported a carriage from Paris, in which he intended to enter his new territory. From this intention, however, he had been dissuaded by the Governor of Louisiana, who declared to him, that neither the Mississippi, nor the Red River, nor Ouachita, were roads adapted for such vehicles, and other roads than those could hardly be found leading to the residence of his excellency; thus the marquis unwillingly concluded to have the vehicle transported in boats. It had been taken to pieces, and afterward rebuilt; and our first sight upon rising, was the equipage before the chateau. Six horses were attached to it, all brilliantly decorated; the body of the vehicle was a huge box with glass windows and doors, of which some panes were broken; four love-gods, of the size of half-grown boys and girls, appeared to support it. In front were two out-riders, with wonderful caps and jackets, bells and whips;—and a gigantic coachman, in spite of the heat of the summer clad in furs and a wig, sat at his post. The whole was surrounded by Indians, Negroes and Acadiens, half-naked, and entirely naked—red, black, and weather-beaten forms, clad in blankets and skins. The bells tolled; the two pieces of ordnance, also imported, were fired; and the guards of the new potentate, thirty in number, were drawn up in military array. I tell you it was a sight, such, as in all probability, will never again be exhibited on the Ouachita.

"The gates of the chateau were still closed, but now they open. The guards present arms; the cannons roar; the bells ring, shaking their casements; and forty rush—laqueys, pages, and, at last, the great man himself, clad in a blue-velvet embroidered coat, with broad stiff skirts, short collar, strewn with fleur-de-lis—on his head a wig, of which the flaps overhang his ears like wings—crossing his breast a broad ribbon, styled the grand cordon, and in his hand a flat and triangular thing, of felt, of which I never could ascertain the use. However, the man was not proud, but smiled kindly to the right and left; his blue eyes bespoke much amiability and concomitant thoughtlessness; his face presented a double chin, exhibiting love of a good table; his step was soft and light, as if he were dancing. On his right appeared the commissary of the State, also in uniform, and wearing a cross in his button-hole. Valets, with wigs, aided the great man in ascending the carriage; six footmen, mounted behind the cavalcade, escorted by the guards and entire court, moved toward the church—the road between which and the chateau had been levelled as much as possible, yet it often required the aid of the escort and servants to raise the vehicle over the logs; and the great man, even on the journey, which covered not more than fifty paces, received contusions, which, as we shall see, deprived him of all desire for a second ride to church. The second week after this event, we beheld the carriage taken asunder, packed, and returned to Paris, where it probably sold at a high price, as a travelled curiosity.

"But to return to our marquis. Having arrived at the church-door, he was received by the priest with holy water. Afterward, mass was celebrated; then the act granting the donation read; then a great feast; and, lastly, a ball. Thus ended the day.

"And what then?"

"My companion and myself found abundance of work. We built a spacious cabin, in which we lodged the pastry-cook of the court, in compensation for which we were boarded from the royal *cuisine*. At the expiration of the first year, each of us had a treasure of three hundred dollars, we being the only persons who worked."

"How were the others employed?"

"They lived on the salaries paid by the Catholic king, and performed comedies and tragedies, played at *faro* and *l'ombre*, danced and gave balls. Parties assembled from all the land. Our first employment

was the construction of a hall, containing saloons, furnished with two huge gambling tables—one for the high nobility, the other for the people. I must tell you, that many people had arrived from all parts of Louisiana, and even from France; singers, players, poets, musicians, confectioners, jewelers, in short, trades of every description—and we had, in consequence, love intrigues of every kind. Some of the most beautiful quadroons were imported from New-Orleans, but were not admitted to the balls. The marquis endeavored to create a feeling of philanthropy among the female Creoles, but in vain.

"As you may imagine, we had refused to join the subjects of his excellency, or to accept of the pension, preferring to live independently on the fruits of our labor. Little as we loved the proceedings, we concluded to remain, for another year, at the place; so doing, we raised our capital to nearly seven hundred dollars. A few signs now and then appearing to our more enlightened minds, which led us to speculate on the possible conclusion of all this glory; and we were becoming, also, wearied and disgusted with the shameful life that we daily witnessed. We sold our shanty in right time to the confectioner, and before the expiration of the third year, descended the Red River."

"And what was the fate of New Paris?"

"I had just completed my hut, on my newly acquired possessions, when the news arrived of the sudden disappearance of the marquis, the guards, theatre, saloons—in short, of all the glory of which Louisiana had such exalted expectations. A few of the settlers alone remained; but players, jewellers, singers, and all the mob had vanished to New Orleans, and parts unknown. The dream was at an end."

"Truly that was a dream."

"Such dreams Louisiana and our Creoles had in abundance, and thus was their painful awakening. I might relate to you a dozen such dreams—for instance, the dream of Baron Bostrop, who again was selected to raise a seigneurie of German peasants; he actually collected twenty-five families, and introduced among them a new system, which he eagerly desired should serve as a model for all America. In his all-wise calculation, he established fifty collectors, directors, and surveyors over the twenty-five boors, who, in less than three years, stripped him, his partner, and his twenty-five poor German peasants of all their possessions."

"These Frenchmen are really the

strangest colonists in the world. Ridiculous farces must have been performed."

"Yes," remarked Wetherell; "but these scenes again had their bad sides. Their noble adventurer brought money to the country, it is true, but also all the evils of a dissipated court—idleness, intemperance, and an arrogance, which regards the honest laborer with contempt, and which, to the present day, is conspicuous in the Creoles. Only hear them praising the good old time, when government sent polished *gentilshommes* to the land, with money, to spend freely. Thus, naturally, the Cochon-Yankees producing, in lieu of the harmony of sounds, the discordant chopping of axes, odious to their eyes and ears."

"Again you judge too severely, Mr. Wetherell. Are you aware of the circumstance, that that very arrogance of the noble French colonists gives their descendants a peculiar charm, which we should justly regard? Our development was more rational, more in accordance with liberty; but again so even and regular, that our whole history hardly produces material for a single novel, and our novelists have always to recur to the Indians. But what glorious themes are offered by the Creoles and their ancestors! what a splendid second Knickerbocker could be furnished by the great marquis de Maison Rouge! I think myself of forming a farce out of this subject."

"There again we behold the aristocrat," laughs Wetherell, but stops—and I ditto, since I feel my eyes covered by hands that can only be those of Louise.

"What!" she cried, "the marquis of Maison Rouge, a subject for a Knickerbocker?"

I turned, regarding her in some confusion, as also did Wetherell and Blount, indeed all of us; and we felt as children, surprised in pilfering forbidden fruit.

"No, no, madam," laughed Wetherell, "we have but sparingly made use of the ancient custom."

"What custom?"

"The custom, madam, of reviewing, and sifting the absent; but due regard for the Creole ladies, especially if they resemble the noble daughters of Menou."

Louise raises her finger.

"You abominable democrats know that Howard shall never be a democrat."

"Then we say, Mrs. Howard rules the roast."

"I wish I could," she laughs.

And the dinner-bell rings, and cuts short the joke. For an instant all stand in ex-

pectation, to make room for the ladies ; but we, who had lunched but a few hours previously, prefer remaining on deck. Off march the glorious Jacksonites.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FATHER'S HOUSE.

BAKER's settlement is far in the rear ; we approach the upper edge of the great prairie, stretching from the right, or rather as we are ascending the left shore of the river, toward Opelousas. Our steamer, taking advantage of the currents, glides closely in shore, and the variegated lustre of this beautiful prairie is developed in all its glorious splendor before our eyes. It is the most magnificent sight ever witnessed by human eye—an ocean of flowers and spicy odors, the grass blades rising and falling, like the light waves created by the fanning breeze in the declining sun. In moving along the prairie, illuminated by its oblique rays, the heads of oxen and horses are visible from the high grass ; in their mad bounds, these animals resemble porpoises and grampuses, rolling toward a vessel in a calm sea. Further toward the west, this immense prairie is bounded by the edge of a black forest, appearing like a frame to this beautiful picture. Many days of the first years of my settlement, were spent by me in this wide prairie, though it is but a meadow, when compared to those situated farther west. It is to be deplored, that the increasing cultivation deprives it, by degrees, of that wild, grand, and solitary character, which renders the Sabine, Arkansas, and Oregon prairies so imposing ; the size of their trees is usually inferior to that gigantic height which they attain in the lowlands of the Mississippi territory—only in a blue distance your eye beholds scattered trees, like solitary sails on the rolling billows ; but on penetrating deeper into those grass deserts, undulating in the breeze like ocean waves, with some scattered sails on the distant horizon ; ever and anon meadows and grass meet your eye, with a few groups of trees, from which stags bound forth on your approach, and, with astonished gaze, seem innocently to ask the errand that brought you. I often felt grieved to raise the rifle at these creatures, which, on the first fire, seek with a wild bound the sheltering thicket. On moving thus unimpeded, I say, over these immense deserts, the deep silence only interrupted at intervals by a herd of prairie

dogs, or wolves—something like awe creeps over you, the magnitude and immensity of nature fill your senses, and your entire being ; the movements of your fellow men and yourselves appear small, trifling, and contemptible ; an indescribable awe, a secret shudder seizes on the solitary wanderer, as he proceeds on, and on, for days !! In such days and hours, the omnipotence of the Creator penetrates your inmost soul, perhaps hardened and petrified in the cares of life ! If you were ever so incredulous, here you will surely be converted ! It is the tabernacle of God, perhaps the only one capable of leading back the wayward to the belief in Him. Send the atheist for a month—but for a month, to our prairies, and he will—nay, he must return, a believer ! a devout, a penitent believer !

The steamer stops at Avoyelle's settlement to receive passengers, and to land others ; among the rest, the delegates from the democratic committee. Doughby and his followers remain undismayed. The first plantations glide by us ; on both sides are cotton and tobacco fields, and many herds of cattle. Prairies on both shores of the river, dark forests in the rear ; the edge of the river lined with cypress-trees, the dark-green color of which, and numerous boughs and limbs, are beneficent to the eye. As we pass the cypress-trees, a couple of huge brown monsters leap into the stream from the rotten logs, while others cast their dull and motionless eyes on us. They are alligators, holding their siesta. As the steamer advances, the scenery again changes ; willow and cotton-trees indicate a light soil. We approach Holme's station, the heart of the Creole settlements ; the cheerful planter and negro residences, with their cotton fields, already bespeak American energy, and the presence of members of Uncle Sam's family. A dozen American families have settled here, simultaneously with myself. They thrive well. It is charming to me, to view the development of our country in its various phases, and to consider the abyss between the past and the present. Thus I have seen the settlements—the plantations, which we are approaching, exclusively inhabited by Creoles, and in as poor a state of cultivation as can be imagined. I full well remember my sadness, at beholding these Rip van Winkle huts and houses, and those meagre cotton and tobacco fields covered with weeds. It seemed a cursed spot, on which work would be utterly useless, and the community doomed to starvation. But a few dozen Ameri-

cans have arrived, and they have already raised the character of the land. At first there was no end to quarrels, slanders, and *bon mots*. The whole community had but one voice in this respect: it resembled an able-bodied landlord, who, within his four walls, carés for neither the world nor his guests—well aware that both must drink his sour wine, it being the only species in that entire region; and who was only roused from his lethargy on suddenly beholding, opposite his door, a new sign and a new landlord, promising cheap fare. Notwithstanding the noise of the good man and his party, the community are eager to prove the wine of the new comer; find it superior to the former sour stuff, and have gained by the rivalry. They have gained, the place has gained, for the influx of travellers increases by the fame of the good wine and the excellent host. The same with our Creoles on this, and all other stations. Their coarse and heavy tobacco becomes fragrant and perfumed, their yellow and short cotton long and white, excelling all the rest in the State. It was precisely the same with their little community, as with the above; the people lived comfortably and contentedly in their indolence, but were hurried out of it by the lively approach of a youthful rival; and it requires the exercise of all their five senses, to preserve themselves from being overshadowed, if not overwhelmed.

It is five o'clock; we approach our desired destination. Again some delegates are landed. The steamer glides at the rate of twelve miles per hour. Plantations succeed each other in rapid succession. Louise is again a child, every house and plantation are fresh in her memory; in every one of the larger plantations she has attended a ball—she relates to Julie, and Julie to her—all her stories would fill a volume, and again the sketches of Creole life appear so lovely from her lips. How many sides do the things of this world present! And again how much it depends on the form in which they are presented, whether they please or offend our senses. How lovely sound these traits of French *élourderie* from her lips! Hear her relating her sayings and doings, how the old Grandpapa Grevecourt danced his last minuet with her, in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of his wedding day; how—how!—but her time fails her, for on every passing piazza she is recognized by beings evincing their joy in every possible manner. The scene grows more lively, as our floating hotel proceeds. Suddenly, both Louise and Julie grow more earnest;

their looks rest on bluffs overhanging the shores for twenty feet, which, crowned with evergreens, are reflected by the red waters.

"There, yes, there—" stammered Louise, unable to proceed.

Both women seem anxious to pierce the projecting woods. Tears fill their eyes.

"There is our port," whispered Louise, with a voice subdued by delight and joyous expectation. My arm encircles her waist—she is trembling with emotion. From the last plantation a salute reaches us, but neither Louise nor Julie has ears for it. The father's house, the desire to behold it, fills their child-like souls.

"What may mamma be doing?" weeps Julie.

"She is thinking of us," replies Louise, with tear-filled eyes.

"And papa?"

"Ah, papa!"

At this moment Doughby ascends with his flock from the dining saloon.

"Doughby!" exclaims Julie, hastening toward him.

"See, Doughby!"

"What, Julie?"

"The port, our destination, behind the group of trees."

"What is behind the group?"

"My father's house!" cries Julie.

"Indeed. 'Pon my soul, we have neglected to land a delegate for Cane River station, Captain Johns."

"Not neglected," cries Captain Johns—"not neglected, major; remember Messieurs Trumbull, Heath and Blount."

"Ah, true; but 't would be better if one took upon himself that station."

"I don't think so, major; leave it to the gentlemen."

"You are right, captain. Well, then," turning to Julie, "we are at the end of our journey."

He received no answer. Louise casts a peculiar glance at him, and then turns aside—regards Julie for a moment with compassion, and approaches nearer and nearer to me, as if desirous of being as far as possible from Doughby. The latter stood in consternation—at last he cried,

"But what is that?"

Both women regard him again: their lips quiver, but utter not a word.

I was somewhat astonished—for little as such want of sympathy would have touched our American ladies, it wounded deeply here. Our ladies in question are of French blood, and of more ardent feelings; and I fear they have made a discovery in Doughby, which may prove fatal to the Kentuckian—the discovery of a cer-

tain vulgarity, of a vacancy of mind—something like disgust is visible in their countenances.

Whence this delicate feeling among women? who, possessed of less acuteness than men, on the other hand, penetrate so much deeper? Is it the consequence of their more delicate organic construction, of their more excitable nervous system, which affects their minds more vehemently?—or of a nicer tact in the perceptive power, unruffled by our stronger passions? or of a natural antipathy for everything vulgar and heartless? Certain it is that this delicate tact, this sensible irritability among women, is a distinguishing feature—that every harsh sound vibrates stronger in their organic system than with us; this vibration may cease, but its traces are always left.

"Oh, George!" lisped Louise, with inexpressibly tender emotion.

"Dear Louise!"

"Poor Julie!"

"Not so, Louise—not so, Julie. Allow no storm to darken the serene sky of your matrimonial life, so long as you can avoid it. We hasten toward your father's house."

And Doughby takes the hand of his wife and searches her eyes, while she raises her looks to his. The cloud on the blue horizon appears to vanish, without leaving a trace of its existence; but it should be remembered that this little cloud still, perhaps, leaves a light vapor, as the breath, gliding over the highly polished steel, if often repeated, at last leaves a rust—the rust of the gloomy consciousness of deceived hopes and blighted happiness.

But behold the bluffs, passing us like phantoms.

"Mamma!" cry simultaneously Louise and Julie—"Mamma!" they cry, stretching their hands toward the beloved mother, and the mother extending hers toward the dear children.

Our steamer lays to at the landing; all is forgiven and all forgotten. Louise can hardly await the moment, when the plank touches the shore. She hurries me after her—Julie propels me from behind; now they leave me to myself, and hasten to the arms of their mamma.

How different they are from our Northerners! With real Americans, of Uncle Sam's family, how calmly, how coldly would all have proceeded! First, the two ladies would have made a triumphant promenade through the ranks of their companions, beatified by their presence—perhaps would have bestowed here and there a gracious bow, in token of satisfaction;

then their step, by degrees, would have become lighter, but not sufficiently light to incur the chance of reprimand with Madame Chegarry, of St. John's Square; ma would have approached the landing, within twenty steps, the gracious ladies would have extended their hands with dignity, and taken that of ma, and the following tender dialogue would have ensued, as surely as the multiplication table from the lips of a school-boy:

"Oh! my dear ma, how glad I am!"

"You made me so very happy, my dear children! I am so glad, indeed!"

"I am so delighted to see you look so well, ma!"

"I feel in good health, my dear."

"And how is pa?"

"Thank you, my dear, he is very well, indeed."

Thus the dialogue would have sounded, ten thousand to one. But *here*, mother and daughters fly into each other's arms, and press each other, as though they would never separate; or as if they had returned from a voyage round the world, or from a desolate island on which they had been cast away. Tears flow in streams—they appear as though they would never separate. But at last Louise seizes on my arm, and, with tears in her eyes, drags me to her dear mamma, who would have found use for all the arms of Briareus; for now the papa advances also, who hitherto had been concealed behind an immense cotton-tree. Louise bounds toward him, crying, "*Méchant que tu es, papa!*" and drawing him toward dear mamma. Steamer and spectators are entirely forgotten; and why should they be remembered? They are on their own soil, on the threshold of their father's house, and allow their hearts to speak, where we Northerners would hardly permit a pulsation to ruffle our veins. Nothing disturbs our composure!

In the meantime comes Doughby, who at last has cleared himself of his democrats, and with him our guests. He welcomes his father and mother-in-law on their own soil, and laughing, squeezes their hands, so that both cry out at the Kentuckian joke; mamma seizes her essence-bottle—the unfortunate Doughby having a strong odor of toddy. Yet there is something very graceful in the loveliness with which the family scene dissolves, and in the etiquette with which their guests are received! That aristocratic demeanor and the strain of words, even though it be void of inward feeling, form a pleasant change from our

"How d'ye do?"

After the first salutations, Papa Menou

leads his guests to his elegant carriage with two fleet mares, which are conducted by Charles, who had been entirely overlooked by us; while we, six in number, with our travelling bags, trunks and band-boxes, ascend the old family carriage.

And Louise again becomes so joyous! now she kisses mamma, then papa, whom we had taken between us in the middle of the back seat; and then she chides Cato for driving too slow, and the black grins with delight. All speak together—our box during the ten minutes' drive, resembles a little Babel. But see there! Louise suddenly ceases, raises her hand to her brow—a tear!

“What is it, Louise?”

Louise remains silent, but points mechanically from the window; I behold her father's house, visible in the wreath of surrounding acacias and cotton-trees. A pause ensues, during which the father and mother behold, in emotion, their tender child. Louise's eyes again rest on the dwelling, again tears fill her eyes; her lips quiver, she seizes my hand—father and mother grow more amazed, and regard their daughter with anxious eyes.

“Louise!” I address her in a kind tone.

Louise remains silent, regarding the building with its picturesque gables and architectural decorations. Yes, it is her father's house, which she enters now for the first time since she was mine. Again it stands before her, calling to her mind the present and the future—those days when she, blooming and serene, a tender bud, moved in the rosy leading-strings of parental affection, breathing fragrant odors,

knowing no cares, but fluttering from one innocent enjoyment to the other! And now the present, with all its cares of daily life which she shares with me, and in the background the gray future, with its dark veil! All that enters her mind, and the question, whether her choice has been good or bad, now appears written, as it were, on a shield against her father's house. Yes, it is an important moment for me, since it decides whether we have mutually promoted each other's happiness.

I looked at her with anxiety and emotion.

Her swimming eyes, still rest in silent anguish on the house, on every hut and tree within her view—now suddenly they descend on me: she presses my hand, and sinks into my arms.

“George!”

“Louise! do you regret having left the house of your father?” I asked in a low tender tone.

“No! no!” she whispered.

“Thank you.” Now I feel my happiness, since I have caused hers. Father and mother regard us in astonishment.—On raising our eyes, they encounter those of Julie, who has suppressed a similar emotion, but who is clinging to her mother as though she never would leave her.

“*Mes enfans! voilà du monde, qui nous attend,*” admonishes papa.

And as the victorious rays of the sun subdue the storm, so vanish tears and clouds at these words. Twenty voices, saluting us, rouse us fully from our gloomy thoughts.

PART FOURTH.

SCENES IN THE SOUTH-WEST.

CHAPTER I.

THE FATHER'S HOUSE.

IT is a delightful evening! To the west of the plantation the forest glows like a sea of fire. Flaming through the plaquemines, cherry-trees, pawpaws and peccans, the rays of the setting sun illumine the landscape gloriously, giving to the *tout ensemble* the enchanting aspect of the gardens of Hesperides!

The gable-ends of the parental house peep forth, dancing amid the variegated colors of the cotton and locust-tree. Light and darkness seem to meet, and steal one last embrace, ere the approaching stars hang out their lamps with their prying and mysterious twinkle!

All nature trembles in the pulsation of departing day! Trees and bushes, orange and lemon-groves, wind along the south-west and east, from Seeche toward the negro village, waving gracefully in the awakening breeze. The negro huts, with their small gardens, appear and vanish in the scintillating atmosphere. The unbounded cotton fields, which extend for miles, float like seas of fire on to the primitive forests. Such an evening makes you forget the heat of summer, and you exclaim spontaneously: "It is indeed a glorious land, our Louisiana!"

But Mrs. Houston and her party have alighted, and await us on the piazza. Near them are some strange faces, which seem to occasion no small embarrassment among our countrymen. How perplexing is this "*touch-me-not*" air, this stiffness, this stub-

bornness, which opposes all friendly approach until the ceremony of formal introduction? And how wonderfully different in this respect are the French and the Creoles—with what anxious attention they jump, dance and run to meet us, as school-boys, escaped from the rod of their preceptor, run to their mother, trying to catch the sandwiches they have already perceived in her hand? What a charmingly natural impulse was it! that prompted our parents to come forth and meet their children! What a lovely feature of Creole reunion did this tableau present! and what a high compliment was the unreserved expression of their feelings to the sentiment and delicacy of their visitors. And how amiably anxious did the visitors immediately become to evince themselves worthy of such confidence.

Two ladies on horseback, accompanied by an elderly gentleman, approach from the village, directly toward our carriage, at the moment we are about to alight; and from the bushes which fringe the lake, two others also appear. They are Vergennes and D'Ermonville, with a lady, and the whole party evidently intend a water excursion; for they shoulder their oars, present, and then run toward us. All appear perfectly at home and at their ease, with the exception of Mrs. Houston and her party, and they seem awkward, stoical, and immovable in this exciting scene.

Meanwhile, mamma and Julie are assisted from the carriage by Messieurs Lasalle and Morteville. Louise, instead of accepting my proffered gallantries, jumps laugh-

ing into the arms of the ladies' chevalier, whom she denominates "*cher Papa Rossignolles*;" and who—*sans façon*—and without my permission, takes immediate advantage of this endearing appellation to imprint a kiss on her left, another on her right cheek: at which she appeared more delighted than abashed.

"George," cries she laughing, "Papa Rossignolles."

"Papa Rossignolles, *mon Mari!*" and the gentleman turns, and bows with much grace; presenting to my view a physiognomy on which ancient nobility is depicted in every lineament.

I was about to exchange some courtesies with him, but Louise ran hastily toward the two ladies who had just alighted from their horses; and amid the storm of salutations and embraces, we could not find an opportunity to display either our dignity or our politeness.

"Ninon!" "Genevieve!" "Louise!" cry all three at once; and then, firmly locked arm-in-arm, they dance up the piazza, and I after them, bearing a reticule, shawl, and similar necessaries. On the way, Louise pauses to return half-a-dozen courtesies, and as many embraces—on which Vergennes and D'Ermonville approach jokingly for their share; but she snaps her fingers at them, and with a laughing "How d'ye do?" gives a little finger to each. In default of something better, they accept this, and are about to carry it to their lips; but she refuses, tapping the cheek of each playfully. And she is right; for give these Frenchmen the little finger, and in half an hour they will desire the whole hand.

Now approach dozens of servants, chambermaids and waiters, (black, of course,) all in their gala liveries, green and gold—the girls in dark red and green, with handkerchiefs twisted into turbans on their heads—all showing their teeth, and grinning with joy. They are headed by old Diana, the housekeeper; who, armed with four bunches of keys—each containing twenty at the least, represents pretty faithfully a major domo. She is received immediately by Louise, who cries out, "Ah, Diana! our rooms—quick, our rooms!" and without giving the old wench time to kiss her hand, she must be off immediately.

"The rooms! the rooms!" and off we go, followed by a dozen black spirits, each carrying a portion of our baggage, and re-sounding like thunder through the corridors. Again Louise cries out:

"*Mais, mon Dieu!* Diana, where are

you going to? have you lost your senses? are not these our rooms?"

And Diana laughs, or rather grins, and shows her teeth, and replies:

"Monsieur le Comte de Rossignolles."

"Papa Rossignolles!" says Louise; "why, he always used to occupy the rooms overlooking the lake."

"Le Baron de Lasalle," grinned the wench, with a satirical smile.

"Pshaw! what confusion!" grumbles Louise. "You see how it is, George; I declare, when one is from home, everything goes wrong!" and away she trips, somewhat impatiently, after the old woman, who stops at last at the end of the long corridor, before a room on the piazza, which she opens.

This little room is indeed beautiful—so cozy and secreted! Lemon and orange branches grow through the blinds into the room: you may gather the golden fruit, without putting your hand out of the window.

"But small, Louise, very small—hardly twelve feet by twelve—much too small; and only a single bed."

"But, gracious Heaven!" cries Louise again, "what did papa think of?"

And old Diana laughs; but Louise leaves everything, takes me by the hand, and runs off, Heaven knows whither! But off she goes, through the long zig-zag way to the piazza, where papa is still standing with his guests. As he sees Louise, a roguish smile passes over his somewhat withered but fatherly countenance. Impatiently, she draws him aside.

"*Viens, papa, viens, papa; qu'as tu fait!*"

And come he must, whether he will or no, through the labyrinthian corridor; for, as I said, the house—or rather the three houses—form a most chaotic labyrinth; which, however, affords more comforts than you might imagine. Arrived before the room, she drags him in; and leaving him standing, she trips impatiently up and down—once, twice, she strides, and she is very ludicrous to look upon, seeming as if she wants to measure the nut-shell of a room. At last she turns to papa.

"But, papa, what do you think? what arrangement can we make? There is too little room."

And the papa laughs: "But, my dear child—my sweet little one, this is for your husband; and is n't your husband my dear Howard? Don't you like this little room? To yourself, my dear Louise, I have given the cabinet next our own apartment."

"But, papa, how odd you are!" grumbles Louise,

"But, my good little Louise, I supposed that you would prefer being near papa and mamma?"

"You are very good," said Louise, but lets her lower lip hang down, pouting so charmingly, that her white and pearly teeth show between. A very rare article these fine teeth, with Creoles; they eat too much sugar.

This pouting is really charming; papa laughs, and with an *entréchat*, jumps to the wall, and puts his hand under the silk cover of the bed—a spring cracks—a gilt handle appears; he turns, and the wall begins to move, to open; and the single bed becomes a double, and the little cabinet, a large sleeping-room. Louise stares, claps her hands, and falls into the arms of the papa—who, like most of the Creoles, is a kind of mechanical magician in such matters; and the papa rolls the wall up again, and points to another spring, which discloses a door secreted in the wall; and with the words, "*Ah, te voilà bien attrapé,*" off he runs. And the idea of this, the agreeable surprise it caused, appears to us the more pleasant, as he had indeed to break through a wall before he could be able to afford this pleasure to his dear child. No American papa would have dreamed of such an original idea as this; it would not, during his whole life time, have entered his dry brains.

Very comfortable—indeed very neat; these two toilets are very nice; the bed room arranged in excellent taste, can, at your own convenience, be changed into two dressing-rooms. And Louise trips from one room into the other, examines the toilet, the different perfumes, waters, brushes, and all those nameless items. All seems to her admirable.

"Louise, shall we not change our dress?"

And she puts her finger on one of the buttons of her riding-dress, but stops—a new thought passes her mind. She must first see if the house stands still on its old place.

"The changes, the improvements," she says, laughing, she must see first; and I have no choice but to accompany her.

The inspection tour leads first into the room of mamma, who is not *chez elle*; a hasty glance is cast into the boudoir, and then we proceed. Diana, who is passing by with four bundles of keys, is arrested. And now begins the inquiry, and the examination.

Both speak at once. Each nail which has been put in during her absence, and the reason why it has been put in—these and numerous other particulars have to be

explained. A unique thing is a quick and voluble female tongue!

All the rooms which remain still unoccupied are quickly inspected, each corner is looked into; and even the store-room and the wardrobe of the blacks are not forgotten. At this latter place papa meets us:

"Papa," she says, "you have got too many woollen blankets—what do you want to do with all of them? The moth, you know——"

And papa smiled.

"A hundred of them we might use," is her determined answer. "We'll send for them—or better, papa, you send them to us."

And the papa nods and smiles, and she flies to his embrace.

"O mon cher papa!"

"Ma petite chère Louise!"

And we proceed onward, after she had kissed her hands in thanks for the woollen covers. She could find use for everything, I believe. If papa and mamma would only let her have her own way, they would not have a dish left in the house.

From the house we go into the garden, or better, into the lemon and orange forest, where some hundreds of orange and lemon-trees are covered with fruit, for the first time in six years; for, in the winter of 1822, they were all frozen. They form a delicious wreath of golden fruits and aromatic flowers. Here, too, Louise has some advice to give.

"We could use some thirty or forty more orange and lemon-trees, George. Ours will not bear for some years."

"But, Louise, we must first have tubs made, in which to send them down, and that arrangement would give too much trouble."

"Only let papa look out," cried she, "and he will find help."

And I believe he is sure to find it; for, on this point, the Creole papa is again very different from your American papas. The more his children harass him, the more he likes it: his tenderness has no limits—it is really boundless.

From the gardens Louise runs into the negro village, and the black people hardly discover the form of their favorite, when they begin shouting and hurrahing. From every side they come running—children, boys and girls, crying and yelling with joy—a whole herd of black urchins, at least a hundred, from the two years' old picaninny to the twelve years' old girl or boy. She looks into every hut, laughingly exchanges a few words with its inmates, and runs out again, to repeat the same thing at the next. On she walks into the

village, farther down, and finally turns to me :

"George, we will now go to old Toni ; you know Toni, who lived with grandpapa."

She is the first negress that came into the family, and, to a certain extent, the progenitress of the black tribe on the plantation.

"Toni !" she cries, "Toni ! dear, good Toni ! don't you know your Louise any more ?"

Toni is an ice-gray negress, who, were she sitting in the garden among the shrubbery, would easily be taken for an old statue covered with moss ; for her face is not covered with negro-wool, but with a kind of hairy moss, which has a wonderful effect on the dark queen's stony face. Her eyes are deeply sunk, and only an occasional glance of the whites shows that she has not yet totally lost the power of sight. She is a picturesque, centenary fragment—this old Toni—as she is sitting there, wrapped up in three woollen covers, spite of the warm weather.

On hearing Louise, she raises her voice, which is more like a rattling death-groan, than a human voice ; she stretches forth her dried up right hand from the covers and takes one of Louise's hands, presses it, and casts her eyes up to her, but quickly casts them down again, the evening sunset being too bright for them.

"My good child !" she croaked, and Louise addresses her :

"Toni ! Toni ! you must go into the hut, the evening air becomes too chilly for you ;" and the old woman nods, and we take her and lead her to her hut, in which she lives with one of her great-grand-daughters, and lay her upon her bed, and she croaks again, "My good child !" And Louise inquires whether she is satisfied, and whether she has no other wish.

This she has not, be it said to Menou's honor—who feeds and cares for the old woman as he would for his grandmother, although she has a fortune of some thousand dollars of her own, as is often the case with old faithful negroes, who take care of their savings. Thoughtful, we left old Toni's hut, before which the whole colored population of the village had assembled. Louise now has a chance of lightening her pretty heavy reticule. And she does so : every one gets his part—the older ones a half, the smaller a quarter dollar, and the smallest a picayune. The joy was so great, that we had really to defend ourselves against its expressions, or they would have carried us on their hands. At last we bend our steps homeward, just as the

flaming fireball disappears behind the wreath of cherry-trees.

"We must think of our toilet, George," said Louise. "Papa expects it on these occasions."

"He is right, Louise ; an elegant toilet is the principle of life in a saloon."

But see ! On arriving at the principal building, we find Doughby and Julie, engaged in a similar excursion ; only, poor Julie is not so movable, and likes shorter distances. She stands before the house, Doughby with the overseer : Monsieur Tricot is standing near the dog-kennel. Menou keeps a dozen dogs, to the breed and improvement of which, he pays great attention. This is one of his old, aristocratic hobby-horses. Three bloodhounds, as high as calves, but beautiful and slenderly built, are here. Doughby has again some trick in his head ; but what it is, I do n't know yet. He looks at the dogs so inquisitively, and at the same time it is evident that there is something in his mind, which at last comes out. He wants to have the dogs out, to see their gait, and so forth. Monsieur Tricot objects, saying that he would not dare do it, unless he had four lives ; three they would take in less time than one could eat a cotelette : only Monsieur de Menou could manage them. Doughby still thinks he should like to try.

"Pshaw ! with your bloodhounds and wild beasts !" he cries. "I tell you, brother-in-law, man is the most ferocious animal of all ; he can conquer every one of them. Last year, I saw such a wild caravan in New-Orleans ! a lion, and some bears and panthers, with which they made a show. Well, I was looking at the lion, and while looking, it came into my head, and I was firmly convinced of it, that I could whip him. I told it to the keeper ; says I, 'What 'll you bet ? I'll lick him, I'll show you how a Kentuckian fights a lion ; and in addition, you may hang some panthers and wild-cats upon me : I'll get along with all of them.' I would fight such a bloodhound too. But where are you going to ?" he cried after us, as we had already proceeded on our way toward the house, not to be present at another heroic Kentucky deed, and knowing this to be the best means to get the Hotspur back to his senses. He has a great desire for a pugilistic set-to, it is evident. Eight weeks ago, no one could have persuaded him from it, but six weeks in matrimony change a man a great deal ; they make him cooler and more tame. To his question, "Where are you going ?" "To make our toilet !" was our answer.

"Make our toilet?" he said, muttering, and glancing at his dress; "I think we look decent enough."

"We go to table, and the company, as you know, is select—we can't make our appearance in boots."

"You are right; we must forget nothing, else they might take us for a pair of squatters!"

He throws another longing glance at the two bears, that walk up and down by their chains, in front of their kennels; then he turns his back to them and follows us.

"So we'll look to our toilet, Julie; but be quick, Howard, I'll be with you before you expect it."

"Never mind hurrying, Doughby, we'll have the pleasure of your company often enough, without that."

"He is, indeed, no bad boy, dear Louise; a little rough, it is true, and old habit is still too strong in him; it glows and burns like an interior fire; but it does not break out so fiercely as it did, and a very good feature in his character, is the total absence of malice or ill will. Upon the whole, there is already a difference to be seen, between the bachelor Doughby and the husband."

"But the polish is wanted," remarked Louise; "he is a semi-barbarian."

"That is the truth; but it will soon change, for he has ambition, and this, you know, is the lever by which the roughest block——"

But Louise had already disappeared to her cabinet; and I, too, will commence my toilet.

I was arranged, with the exception of my coat, when Louise just stepped in, with two ears of rye in her hand, imported from the celebrated flower-manufactory of Madame Dubois; and at the same moment, some one knocked at the corridor-door.

"Walk in!"

And Doughby enters, already dressed.

"Doughby, if you will favor us with a visit about ten minutes later, I believe the pleasure will not be lessened by the delay: you see, we are dressing!"

"Then I won't disturb you," rejoined Doughby. "I only came, because Julie drove me away with her musquito-fan. She says I destroyed a whole bouquet of flowers, which was worth I don't know how many dollars, and came from a celebrated factory."

Louise makes me a sign, which seems to say: "let him remain."

"Well, boy, then take a seat."

"Hark ye!" he continued: "when I am all alone, and have nothing to do, such

devilish thoughts always cross my head, one after another."

"What do you think, George?" says Louise, holding the two ears over her hair, which is braided into a knot.

"Very pretty, indeed! but I would not place them into the knot, but on both sides, and lying down more, something like this, that the hair may not be concealed by them."

And I put the ears on both sides of the hair knot.

"You are right, George," answers Louise, hurrying back to the cabinet and returning in a moment, with her hair differently arranged.

"And what robe, George?"

"Evening dress, Louise. You know pink agrees admirably with your fair hair and roguish eyes."

"But what coat do you take?"

"Brown is the latest fashion."

"Well, then, I'll take brown, too."

"That suits you excellently, also."

And my dear little wife again disappears through the door. Doughby looks attentively after her, then at me, and is evidently lost in thought. In a few moments she trips gayly back again, in a robe of brown *Gros de Naples*.

"Now," said she, laughing, "*go thou and do likewise*. I meanwhile will entertain our brother-in-law."

And I went and donned my brown dress-coat.

"The enamelled buttons in your bosom are beautiful, George; I'll wear bracelets of the same form."

And out she rushes again, and returns with the bracelets, which she hands to me.

"Will you be so kind?"

And I put the gold wristlets around the soft arm, which I kissed, just as Julie, who had finished her toilet, knocks at the door, and putting in her hand, inquires:

"Can I come in?"

"D'ye see Doughby?" says Julie, laughing, and pointing at me as I just finished my task.

"But Julie," cried Louise, clapping her hands in ludicrous fright, "you still have *coiffure* of the steamboat!"

"That's Doughby's fault, who so confused mine and Polly's head, that she gave me again the prunella gaiters. Psyche, go and tell Polly to fetch the green shoes."

And Psyche ran, and Polly brought the green shoes, and Psyche the foot-stool, on which Julie put her right foot.

"Now Doughby, don't you know what is the duty of a gallant husband?" said I.

"What?" inquired Doughby.

I pointed at the foot.

"I hope you do n't want me to untie the shoe-strings?"

"He is not worthy to untie them," remarked Louise.

"In this, my beautiful sister-in-law is perfectly right," laughed Doughby, who willingly proposed for the work, and knelt down, though somewhat awkward, by putting his bear's paws upon the little gaiters.

"Doughby, that's right; I perceive something may yet be made of you. But what would your democrats say, if they were to come in now?"

"*Honi soit qui mal y pense*," replied Doughby, who had already substituted the new dress of one foot for the old one. During the time that he is occupied with the second foot, papa and mamma enter.

For a moment they stare in pleased astonishment. They are highly gratified by the scene, especially mamma; who, judging from the astonishment expressed in her looks, did not think Doughby capable of such an attention.

"Brother," whispered Doughby in my ear, as the papa, mamma, and two daughters, were examining Louise's toilet, "you'll make an adept of me in time."

"And one, I hope, who will certainly find the pearl of wisdom, Doughby. Remember that our wives are Creoles, or what is the same thing, French, who have two souls—an outer conventional, and an inner, natural one. Not until after you have conquered in this soul, and fixed yourself firmly in it, are you sure of her; and the certain means of gaining this point, are these small attentions to trifles—they require to be flattered and petted a little after marriage."

"True, but it is a little troublesome."

"Not if you love your wife—then, it is a pleasure. In no case, be ever again guilty of an impoliteness, such as that on the steamer."

"Polish me a little, my dear fellow," remarked Doughby, shaking my hand. "I want it; I know it well."

And our friends who join us again, interrupt our conversation; and the sound of the dinner-bell, which is now heard, leads us all, gay and merry, to the dining-saloon.

CHAPTER II.

A CREOLE DINNER.

THE day draws to a close, and darkness steals over the corridors. The guests quit

their apartments; and, as they flit past in their altered costumes, amid the dusky light, they are scarcely to be recognized. The company is more numerous than I imagined. The ladies form the appropriate number of the muses, while of gentlemen, we count at least a dozen. As we enter the brilliantly illuminated saloon, a short pause ensues; the necessary introductions take place; and then commences the personal scrutiny, customary on such occasions, which rests for a moment on the face, dress, and general appearance: then terminates with a quiet smile of self-satisfaction.

There is something naive and droll, in this reciprocal examination; this palpable attempt to discover, by a glance, the character and position of those opposite to us, and if they be *comme il faut* or otherwise. To the Creoles, or French, must be awarded the superiority of style in these physiognomical criticisms. Their look is even more curious than our own; but evinces, at the same time, more delicacy and more charity, in spite of the dash of insincerity, which is nevertheless unmistakeable. Their gait, too, is natural, frank, and unartificial; they are entirely at their ease, and appear as though good society were their proper element. Alas! for the Americans, they are—staring!—imperturbable!—boring!—even when their examination is satiated, they are not at rest; but seem uncertain, "*distrain et gauche*," as the French would say; but as I should say, "even as Mrs. Houston looks this moment!" for she really appears as stiff and as important, as though in her single person were vested the right to represent the whole dignity of our pseudo-aristocracy!—of that aristocracy, which often prizes more dearly the laurels acquired by fashionable celebrity, than those accorded in consideration of mere wealth! She examines French and Creoles with a doubtful and cautious aspect, which resolves itself into a smile; but not until she has heard the classic names of Le Comte de Rossignolles! le Baron de Lassalle! de Monteville and others; names united closely with important houses on our Red River, and in the Attakapas—whose founders understood their business so well, that these, their descendants, form in the present day our good society, *par excellence*. And to say the truth, had I to choose between the society of Creoles, and that of the pseudo and monied-aristocracy of New-York, Boston, and Baltimore. I would prefer the former; the latter being neither more nor less than provincial copies of London prints, which, if

you possess tone or taste, only disgusts you the more by their foolish assumption. The Creoles, on the contrary, constitute that society, which dates from the time when noblemen found no rival in newly-acquired wealth, and secure in their own position, put the rest of the world at their ease.

Doughby has already concluded treaties of alliance with many; and has shaken hands with both ladies and gentlemen, with all his Kentucky grace. Just now he approached the Count de Rossignolles—and, “How do you do, my dear count,” said he.

“Very well, my dear Mr. Doughby,” answers the count. “I believe if the good Doughby came into the Tuilleries to Charles X., he would, without ceremony, take the hand of his anointed majesty, and with the same cool composure say, ‘How d’ye do, my dear Mr. Charles X.’”

It is a pity that the opening of the folding-doors to the dining saloon, cuts off this interesting conversation, but what comes, may perhaps be still more interesting, although Doughby seems abashed. It is indeed very funny to see him standing there, solitary and alone, seemingly abandoned by everybody in the world. Doughby is a mere child in this point—he has no idea of the agreeable sensations which are created by a well arranged dining saloon, and an elegant table before our eyes; how beneficially the *ensemble* of gastronomic preparations operates on the heart and soul, and how even the foretaste spreads an involuntary and philanthropic smile on all faces. In some, the effect of this view is already apparent by an involuntary smacking of lips and tongue. This is the case with my neighbor the Chevalier D’Ecars, at whom Doughby looks with a satirical smile; but Doughby, as I before observed, in this point is a complete barbarian, who has never heard either of Lucullus or Apicius, nor has he any idea of the epicure’s philosophy of life, but devours a canvas-back duck as unconcernedly as if it were a mutton-chop. Not so myself, I love a well-supplied table, with fine white table-cloths and elegant services, I do not care much for valuable silver or gold plate, and with us it will do out of place—nice Sevres-china will do just as well, and that before us answers admirably. The decorations are tasteful, the coolers and bottles betray much *savoir vivre*, and the whole arrangement bespeaks much tact and unstudied simplicity. I hate your mountains of roast-beef, which oppress the stomach at first sight, and those monsters of hams and turkeys, swimming in fat, like whales

lost in an unknown bay. No: simple, but tasteful. Fine napkins on the *couverts*, a soup-tureen at each end of the table, with a few covered dishes—in the middle a pyramid, and behind the chairs half-a-dozen neatly-dressed servants, and I am content. I hate the running, jumping, and tumbling of a large dinner, which takes away half your appetite by the thoughts of the plague and fatigue which your poor host has to suffer, and all on your account.

But we have taken our seats. Mine between Louise and Genevieve Rossignolles—a lovely girl, who might become dangerous to Emily, with whom, as I hear to-day, the marriage preliminaries are far from being closed as yet. My rhapsodies are interrupted by the exclamation of “Delicious soup!” which escapes the lips of Monteville. It is an oyster soup that throws him into such ecstasies. I keep to the brown, in which lies mamma’s *forté*. Lassalle is of my opinion, and so is D’Ecars; others join the party in the oyster soup, a short debate arises, but is cut short, and now the current of ideas flows naturally into another direction.

“Do you know, dear Menou,” begins de Vignerolles, “that the newest gastronomic axiom is against covering fish?”

“It depends on the kind of fish; for example, as to soles and fresh codfish, I am of the same opinion as you; but our sturgeon and turbot would not permit it,” replied Menou, with the decided expression of a connoisseur.

“You promised to tell me the mystery of your oyster sauce,” commenced D’Ecars.

“That’s something well known,” interrupted Rossignolles; “but for soles, I prefer lobster sauce, and this is excellent.”

“I take two-thirds of lobsters, cut very fine, with one-third of butter, and my essence of spice.”

The somewhat watery fish-and-sauce conversation was interrupted by the touching of glasses, after which a short pause ensued, which was changed into activity by two new dishes. They are green turtle and pigeon-pies.

“Bon!” says D’Ecars.

“*Delicieux!*” observes Lassalle.

“We’ll try the turtle-pie. I am not generally fond of it, for the meat, say what you may, is neither flesh nor fish, and receives, only through spices, its *haut goût*—and I hate all that is called spice—even against papa’s extract, I have some objections. Spices remain spices, and if they are distilled ever so fine, they destroy the sap of life, and bring drowsy upon you

sooner or later. I like the true spice which nature gives."

Then comes the real thing, the second course, and with it, as an introduction, *canvas-back ducks*. They are a delicacy, which, had Lucullus known of them, he would have deprived Columbus of the honor of the discovery of our part of the world. No European imperial table can boast a dish so tender, so aromatic and so juicy; the meat really melts on your tongue, and the fat runs over your lips, do what you will; it is a genuine gastronomic feast. Deep silence prevails during the six minutes of this sardanapalian, heliogabalian banquet. Every one is busy with himself, and from the most beautiful lips, your glance falls again upon your plate, which glitters with fat. These nice little birds have been caught last night in lake Ocassee, and consequently are perfectly fresh, and so they must be: if they are two days old, they have lost all their *haut-goût*, ay, all *goût*. Our lakes, be it said, *en passant*, although they breathe such horrid exhalations and vapors, are a perfect paradise for gastronomers. They are full of fish, and completely covered with all kinds of water-fowl. A chase on the lake near Natchitoches—the season now is near—is well worth the trouble. The horizon is covered with a thick cloud of wild ducks, geese, and other fowl, and you shoot blindly among them, shoot without pause, as quickly as you can load, or fire into the clouds of smoke in the battle field, without caring whether you hit or not. It is a real battle, which lasts for two or three hours, and which, on one side, is fought by some hundred sportsmen, and by hundreds of thousands of water-birds on the other. Only when you grow tired and weak, when you can neither shoot nor load any more, you pick up the dead, of which, generally more than a hundred fall to each man's share. Upon the whole, though we have no cause for being proud of our tables in summer time, they now become most rich and luxurious.

All who know anything of our country know that much eating in the summer would send us post-haste to heaven; therefore we are obliged to abstain until fall and winter. But this fall and winter! They are other falls and winters than with you! Whole armies of partridges and water-birds come down from the north; our shell-fish, not eatable in summer, are then in season. Our Louisiana is, take it all in all, a glorious country, which would even make a Cerime loose his senses.

There are, for instance, your wild tur-

keys in the north against this colossus, who swims before us in his own fat, like a twenty-gallon barrel. It is now their fattening time, and they employ it so well, that out of twenty which you shoot, eighteen at least burst in falling. But all are caught; for, as you know, these good-hearted animals, like all good-hearted, stupid animals, are caught by dozens, in traps on our plantations, into which they find their way although it is very narrow, but never find it out again. Their meat now is a perfect delicacy; but we prefer the snipes, whose long bills smile upon us most invitingly. There, also, our woodcocks have the advantage of fatness over your northern woodcocks—for I never found one in the north to weigh more than sixteen ounces, and ours are often twenty. They are an excellent, digestible dish, and have just the true flavor.

But, enough of these Louisiana delicacies—of this fragmentary, unconnected conversation, which is mostly about the culinary arts; and in which, to my astonishment, D'Ermonville and Vergennes show pretty extensive knowledge—if they should fail in all, they can still become cooks, who, with us, are paid better than Governors; for I know cooks who get fifteen hundred dollars salary, and Governors who only have a thousand a year. So, the conversation turns upon another topic. A humming begins, the meaning of which we cannot comprehend to this day. The chambertin and chateau margôt, begin to act on the Frenchmen; the madeira, to which we stick, has a delightful effect upon us.

"It is really the best of all wines, this madeira," I observe to Richards.

And Lassalle interrupts with a devout glance—"Oui, it is the king of wines."

"But only as it is drunk with us," adds Hauterouge—Baron de Hauterouge—I must say.

"Ah! it is excellent in Charleston, too!" rejoins Lassalle.

"They pursue the same treatment," asserts Vignerolles.

"But it is abominable in England!" insists Monteville.

"They don't understand the keeping," observes Menou. "They think they have done quite enough, if they send their madeira once or twice to the East Indies, and then keep it in their damp, cold docks, which spoils the wine altogether, and gives it a disagreeable after-taste."

"My wine-cellar," remarks Count Vignerolles, "is the roof."

"The middle terrace, mine, as you

know," says Menou; "this wine is only six years old, but exposed to the heat for five already, in demijohns."

"Do you prefer demijohns to johns?" inquires D'Ecars.

"It came in demijohns," replies Menou.

But the debate about wine at the upper end of the table, is drowned by a louder talk at the foot of it, between Doughby and his two antagonists, D'Ermonvalle and Vergennes. They are seated at the lower end of the table, and are just engaged in a hot debate. Doughby parleys French; Vergennes murders the "*King's English*;" D'Ermonvalle gives a medley of both languages. It is well worth while to listen to them. Vergennes speaks with an apologetic assurance.

"I say de English ladies are booty-full also."

"Booty full!" asks Doughby, staring at him. "*Que pensez-vous avec cela.*"

"Booty full!" repeats Vergennes, with more expression.

"*Ah vous voulez dire,*" says Doughby laughing; "*Nos dames sont presque belles dans visage et leur figure.*"

"*Presque belles,*" laughs Vergennes, turning to D'Ermonvalle. "Hear him, *presque belles!* He mean by dat: *Les dames Américains sont les plus belles quant au visage et à la taille.*"

"*Ah, how drôle!*" rejoins D'Ermonvalle.

"Ah, Mithere Doughby, I must laugh over you," says Vergennes, laughing heartily.

"*Vous riez sur moi!*" inquires Doughby, *mais non pas sur moi à particulier!*"

"No indeed, not in public, but open—I laugh not in particular over you, but I laugh over your French, just because you laugh over my English; and you must know, I live for two year in England, I rid de English, rode de English, I rid de Edinbro Waterly."

"De Edinbro Waterly?" repeats Doughby, staring in astonishment at him.

"The Edinburgh Quarterly!" exclaims Richards laughing, and all of us laugh with him.

Loud laughter resounds through the saloon. This comedy reminds me of a debate, which, to the great amusement of all, took place a few years ago between two honorable members of our Assembly. For as you know, in our General Assembly, the Creoles speak French, and the Americans English. The good R——n was just in an eloquent strain, in which he tried to show the necessity of having the Balize put into better condition; for

which purpose he required only fifty thousand dollars. "What!" suddenly interrupted the Creole, "fifty thousand dollars for a valise! I'll get one for twenty." The one had spoken of the fortifications at the mouth of the Mississippi, and the other had understood a trunk.

With the sparkling champagne, a fresh period of existence seems to commence; the spirits become more flowing, and if the ladies were not here, they might even become stormy. Vergennes has opened a new battery, and lets out something of his French liberalism, of his universal happiness and social philanthropy. Richards and Doughby begin to wrinkle their foreheads.

"*Eh bien, et le principe de l'ordre social!*" cries the more moderate D'Ermonvalle.

"*Ah le principe de l'ordre; c'est une abomination, que ce principe de l'ordre.*"

And he continues; he finds it horrible, that slavery should exist in a land of liberty, which boasts of its civilization and humanity.

Monteville takes up the gauntlet, and remarks quickly, in opposition, although his lips begin to tremble, that our slavery is an old sin, an evil a hundred and fifty years introduced and firmly rooted which could only be removed by time. This, Vergennes does not accede to! such a monstrous evil, which completely ruins social systems, should be destroyed at once: Government ought to act on it, set free the slaves, give them land, establish schools, and so forth. If our government had the omnipotent power of the Olympic Zeus, and the wisdom of his daughter besides, Vergennes would have enough to do for them. To debate with foreigners, especially with political partisans, about our own political institutions, is the most disagreeable thing that can be imagined. They are so firmly rooted in their own opinions, such complete cockneys, who never have ventured, or ever looked beyond the nut-shell in which they were born, that they are like children, sent from the English-speaking north down to us, or from here, thence, to learn the language; and who come and go, repeating always their original phraseology. The principle, even from which they start, is in direct opposition to ours! To them, government is an abstract, almost supernatural thing, which must lead, guide, and create all: a kind of terrestrial divinity, which treats nations as mere material. That we ourselves, we planters—we, the people, are the rulers, and our representatives, senators, governors, secretaries, and even presidents—are

only the servants that execute our will; our mere organs—they can never understand. They cannot comprehend, that we have gained possession of our slaves from our ancestors, under the legal guarantee of a central and State constitution, and in the possession of these slaves, have a property, as holy and unapproachable as any other. 'Man never can be the property of another.' This is their eternal cry.

"It is right, Vergennes," said Monteville. "We liberate our negroes," he continued, "as soon as they have repaid us the sums which their purchase and keeping cost our parents. Forced by the governments of France and England into this morass, we have invested our capital, our property, our all, in it—have invested it under the guaranty of the then existing, the continuing, and still existing constitutions—and demand it as a right, that we be protected in this compulsory investiture. In the southern states we have more than two millions of slaves to a population of a little over four millions of white people: in Louisiana alone, to less than a hundred thousand whites, more than a hundred and twenty thousand colored people! The two millions of blacks of the eleven slave-holding states, valuing them at the least average price—only three hundred dollars per head—it would require an indemnity of six hundred millions of dollars—more than three milliards of French francs. Where," continued Monteville, "is the national treasury that could produce this sum?—where the nation which would burden itself and its offspring for the benefit of such a race, with such an immense weight of debt? But even could this take place, and the eight millions of our northern citizens—for they alone would have to pay this indemnity—if they were to bind this burden upon their coming generations, would the evil be remedied? could they, by their act of emancipation, change the most bestial, the laziest race, upon the face of the earth—a race whom only the lash can induce to labor—into active, useful citizens? Would they not, in the first months of their liberty, become the playthings of some black Spartacus, and begin the struggle of life and death with us?"

Something like this is the reasoning of Monteville, who, during his spluttering speech, becomes more warm, pushes the champagne glass away, and, with a fiery look, measures Vergennes. The good Monteville observes that he has committed a piece of thoughtlessness, by attempting to argue a question which

should never be put by a stranger in our country. It is a question of *meum* and *tuum*—a question of existence—of life—which concerns *us*, and no one else, and which a stranger should not interfere with. What would—I will not say a French or English peer, no, but simply the owner of a manufactory, at whose hospitable table a stranger sat—what would he say, if that stranger was to begin a dissertation upon the monstrous slavery under which his laborers suffered, and the enormous inequality existing between the wages of the poor employes and the profits of the master of the manufactory? But our boasted and beloved liberty has its imperfections, and this is, perhaps, the greatest. Every foreigner, on his arrival, immediately and without consideration, takes liberties which he would not dare take in his own country.

A gloomy and painful silence pervades the whole saloon—a moody anxiety; not a sound is heard, like the calm which precedes the tornado. Every tongue seems to be dumb; the eyes of the Creoles are fixed upon Vergennes and Monteville, and some of the company are pale with anger; the universal hilarity has disappeared, and our ladies are no less excited. I am anxious to see how the episode will conclude.

Suddenly the voice of Monsieur de Vignerolles, in a friendly, good-hearted tone, is heard from the upper end of the table: "Have you been long in our Louisiana, my dear Vergennes?"

"Ten weeks already, Monsieur de Vignerolles."

"Already ten weeks! then you certainly have had great opportunities in that space of time to become acquainted with our country."

And the features of the count, while he speaks, are overspread with a smile so polite, yet so ironical, that that alone would make him appear interesting. We all look at him with expectation.

He turns to Papa Menou.

"Do you remember the times of '88? you were certainly very young then, being five years younger than myself. Ah! what a difference between the *vieille* and *jeune France*?"

"It had much *loyauté* and delicacy, the good old France," murmured Lassalle.

"*Les extrêmes se touchent*," observed the count; "the old and new world touch. In our youth, we hear the romance of the old—in age, the vibrations of the new government."

"I hold with the new," cried Vergennes,

with daring impetuosity. "The good fellow has taken too much chambertin."

"I do not believe, my dear Vergennes," replied Vignerolles in the same friendly tone, "that, upon the whole, the social system has lost by these great revolutions: we have lost, that is certain; but in return, the people have gained."

"Fifty years hence, Europe will be republican or under the northern dynasty," rejoined Vergennes, briefly and with decision.

"That is what Napoleon said," replied the count, in the same easy and pleasant tone. "I, for my part, am of the firm opinion that the throes of the old world will continue, as quietly as they will rise and fall in the new republics. They may, perchance, abate some of their splendor, perhaps not even that; but their existence is too deeply founded in human nature, ever to be overthrown. When Napoleon spoke those celebrated and prophetic words, he had no idea of the great power which has arisen since his fall—the power of the monied aristocracy; which, as mediatrix between nations and thrones, balances each in her scales, lets neither sink, and will never permit northern, unprincipled despotism, to enter the sanctum of European civilization. The principle of the monied aristocracy, *la propriété* which has taken the place of *loyauté*, struggling against the *prolétaires* for the thrones, and *vice versa*—has for its motto, 'security of property.'

"But you will admit, Monsieur de Vignerolles," recommences Vergennes, "that the world has become more democratic within the last twenty years, than it ever was before."

"Without doubt," replies the count; "the masses, or what is the same thing, the democratic interest, have gained ground during these twenty years. But just because they are masses, they will become conservative, as soon as they reach a certain point; for observe, individuals as well as states, are only democratic as long as they are poor; when they get rich, they show themselves conservative and aristocratic. The interests—"

"Oh! these interests! these precious interests!" interrupts Vergennes.

"For us Frenchmen, and for the Europeans in general, it is very hard, dear Vergennes, to understand republican character, and still more difficult to find it to our taste. We have been brought up in too many artificial forms, to accommodate our natures entirely to a purely philosophic order of things. Men appear to us, not only too much at ease, but also too selfish

and interested, when compared with the denouement of the all-sacrificing, generous *loyauté* of monarchical governments; but the reason is, that in decided monarchies the interest of all, the universal egoism, (if I may so express myself,) is concentrated in the hands of a single man and his cabinet; and in republics, this egoism and these interests, are dispersed among the whole mass of citizens; and thus the more republican a government becomes, the more egoistical, selfish, and avaricious are the people. I doubt very much, whether Napoleon, were he to arise in all his might, would receive half the sacrifices from our France, as were, to her misfortune, heaped upon him during the consulate and empire."

"I doubt," he resumes, after a pause, "whether you would now find fifty cavaliers, who would leave their fatherland, their property, and their families, as we did by thousands, to struggle for one great idea. The interests of the mass are the sepulchre of our high *loyauté*, as it was formerly understood; but these interests, on the other hand, have one good effect—partisans are now able to accomplish but little."

"And do you consider this a fortunate thing, Monsieur de Vignerolles?" asks Vergennes, and his lips contract, in a manner which expresses pretty plainly, how willingly he would, himself, be one of these partisan heroes.

"Certainly, dear Vergennes; because we have seen the evils which these partisans, these Mirabeaus, Robespierres, Dantons, and Marats have produced."

And the man stops, casts a fiery glance at the young man, and then continues:

"Ah! my young friend! There is something beautiful, and at the same time something so terrible in a partisan. He is a being who sacrifices all to his peculiar principle, religion, family, home, and fire-side—all must yield to this; he cares not for anarchy and confusion, for the dissolution of all the ties of love, friendship, and society, for streams of blood, or burning cities, as long as his principle advances. This principle is his god, to which he would sacrifice the whole human race. There is, I admit, something sublime in such firm support of a principle; but woe to the weak son of earth who attempts, with all his frailties, to assume almighty power! Sooner or later he falls a sacrifice to his usurpation. Mirabeau, and Robespierre, and Danton, and Marat, were partisans, earthly gods—they fell. Why? because they failed to carry out their principle to the end. One step more, and they

would have triumphed; but this step they were unable to take—their power was exhausted, for they were only sons of earth.”

“But their principle, their system stands firm,” replied Vergennes; “another leads now, and will attain *their* aim.”

“Never,” replied the count—“never will the principle, of one partisan be carried out by another; it is morally impossible. He finds it a monument of daring bravery, and leaves it, like the bare, gigantic walls of a warning temple, built from the ruins of some demolished city, to meet the eye of the passing wanderer, and to commemorate the thousands slaughtered—the lamentations of the fathers and mothers—the curses, and the madness of a whole people; and to serve as a hiding place for night-owls, snakes, and bats.”

“What has the man to say against principles? He seems to be no friend of principles!” whispered Doughby to me. “I would not give a straw for a man without principles.”

“I beg your pardon, Mr. Doughby: a man without maxims is certainly not worth much; but there is a great difference between the man of principles, and the principle-and-system-man,” replies the count, who had overheard him.

“I understand what you mean, Monsieur de Vignerolles,” interrupted Doughby. “To the one, they are a finger-board on his path, to lead him in the right way; to the other, his system, his principle, is a spur, which day and night pierces his flanks and urges him to death. I also could tell something of such principle-men.”

“But, dearest papa,” interrupted Louise suddenly, during the conversation—“with all this discussion of principles, we have forgotten altogether the principle of eating dessert—papa, the dessert!”

And all look up and cry aloud: “*Ma foi! en vérité! mais voyez donc!*” We had, in reality, during the heat of the argument, neglected this important and excellent part of a Louisiana dinner; and the remnants of the second course still stand around in ruins by no means picturesque, while the servants seem to have made themselves comfortable—for not one of them is to be seen.

“Where are all the servants?” asks mamma, “where are they? Not one here—champagne all ready for half an hour on the table, and no dessert? What confusion!”

And papa jumps up, and Louise with him, and both run out into the saloon. Louise returns laughing:

“Now just imagine—Amadée stands in

the midst of our servants and yours, telling them some absurd story, and they are all listening to him with open mouths!”

Renewed laughter. “*Ma foi c’est drole!*”

“Who is this Amadée?” I inquired of Louise.

“Amadée? do n’t you know our Amadée? It is Papa Rossignolles’s Amadée; why, all the world knows him. There he comes! Amadée, dear Amadée!”

And the dear Amadée really comes by papa’s side, who whispers a few words into Rossignolles’s ear, and mamma, the good mamma, looks up astonished, but immediately regains her composure, and gives her hand in a most friendly manner to the old man, who presses it to his lips with French gallantry. We all gaze in expectation on the pantomime. The Creoles put their heads together and whisper; their faces assume a pleasant smile, and then become childishly merry. The good Creoles! Nothing is heard but Amadée.

“But tell me, what does all this mean?”

“Afterward,” whispers Louise, “you will hear it.”

“Amadée—your health!” cries papa, lifting his glass.

And all follow his example.

“*Amadée! ta santé!*”

And old Amadée lifts also the glass which mamma has given him, respectfully salutes all around, and drinks to the health of the company.

That’s a strange thing—very strange indeed. The old Vendéan, or Gascoigne, takes our servants out of the saloon, *sans ceremonie*, to tell them old stories, instead of letting them lay our dessert; and for that, he is toasted by all the Creoles, as if he had performed a most heroic deed. At all events, he must be a most unique specimen of a *ci-devant valet de chambre*, as I suppose him to be.

His was a lantern face, which shows only bones, skin, and wrinkles; a hatchet nose, with a red bulb at its extremity; a pair of small eyes glittering behind grayish winkers; the whole profile remarkably sharp, but not aristocratic—a sort of cunning, police-officer’s physiognomy. The little hair left him he dresses with the greatest care. A thick, short queue hangs over his neck, and two icy-gray puffs over his ears, contrasting boldly with the shining bare skull. His coat is of the finest blue cloth, with white facings, of a fashion half a century old. His gaiters, too, seem to belong to the same era. Now he is occupied exclusively with the arrangement of the dessert, which he alone understands

how to bring on artistically. Our desserts are worthy of this respectful mention; our pine-apple tarts testify a master-hand; they are really delicious. Our bannana tarts, too, though not quite so piquant, are not to be despised. And, as he takes the plates from the hands of the blacks, and arranges the dainties in a most pleasant perspective on the table, a light flashes upon my mind. The old man has doubtless sent the servants out of the room, to put the needful distance between their ears and Vergennes's tongue. Louisa nods assent; but puts her finger, with a meaning look, to her lips.

"I cannot understand, dear Louise, how any one can be so indiscreet—so regardless of *le convenance* of this gourmand. He has displayed his cruel, club-house effervescence, and played the fanatic apostle so boldly, that he deserves to be severely punished! I respect every one's opinion; but delicacy is misplaced, when the life and happiness of our family are in danger. Without the cautious interference of this strange major-domo, a dozen slaves would have heard things, which, in less than a week, might easily have set the heads of our twenty-five thousand negroes on the Red River into such a heat, as would have made all Louisiana too warm for us, as we had not twenty-five hundred whites to oppose them. There is no safe joking on this point: it is terribly earnest, I assure you. We stand on a volcano: we cannot deny it, painful as the truth may be. Knowing our position, we must not permit an inconsiderate fellow to come into the magazine in which we are sitting, with a lighted match, before we have time to clear it, and to prevent the explosion. Our position is obvious; and we should contemplate it like men, and not like silly old women; the Creoles and French are, in this respect, careless, chattering, and barking grannies. I am afraid—and it is useless to conceal my apprehensions—that these Creoles will ultimately convert our Louisiana into another St. Domingo! It is fortunate that we are connected, by federal bonds, with the genuine Uncle Sam in the north!"

Again, merriment resounds in every quarter. Louder and louder wax the voices; and enthusiasm begins to show itself on the countenances, at least of the men. Who would not feel happy under such circumstances? The finest of tropical fruits are before them—pineapples, bananas, grandillons, peccans, and oranges, while champagne and madeira sparkle in their wine-cups.

It is wonderful what success has attended the efforts of our party in attacking the delicious viands and inspiring fluids. It seems as though we were determined to make up for the lost time. Some look rather dreamy, even now; the locust-trees before the house appear to be dancing minuets in their presence; and finally the tables and chairs begin to move.

"Hauterouge," cries de Vergennes, "order! order! We have quite enough of liberty: we want order."

With the tri-colored cockade in his hand and pressing it to his lips, he cries:

"C'est un honte qu'on ait reculé devant l'idée d'une nationale assemblée, qu'on n'ait point fait révolutionnairement une loi d'élection; qu'il fallait une nouvelle loi d'élection, une nouvelle chambre, puis un," and so on, to the evident discomfort of D'Ermonville, who is a complete *doctrinaire*—a new sort of philanthropist—who, in short, broken sentences, analyzes, divides and subdivides *la belle France*, until the infinitesimal particles are in danger of becoming impalpable. He proves the absolute necessity of peace and quiet to the great European family. We had no idea that our Louisiana was divided into so many different parties—Bonapartists and Republicans, Legitimists and Doctrinaires, of all possible genera and species. It is very obvious, that the champagne and madeira have taken effect.

Mrs. Houston now leaves her seat. She has exhibited some impatience while yielding to the Creole fashion, by remaining at table; now she rises, and the other ladies follow. It is indeed time to exchange wine for coffee.

"Mesdames and messieurs," says papa, "will you please to return to the saloon!"

No objection is made to the motion: we immediately defile along the corridors.

CHAPTER III.

THE SOIREE; OR, NEW-ORLEANS IN THE YEAR 1799.

THE count, with Mrs. Houston, leads the way. He is really a complete gentleman; elegant in form, easy and graceful in carriage. Naturally "*distingué*," and without effort to be "*distinguished*," he carefully avoids all that is showy or obtrusive. His countenance is lively and spirited—illuminated by a smile which becomes occasionally ironical, or scornful; yet subsides again to its usual expression of kindness and benevolence—a smile, as charming as rare on the face of a Frenchman, who is by nature malicious. The marked and aris-

ocratic features, the beautiful and snow-white head, with its intellectual and slightly-wrinkled forehead, the fine complexion, the light-blue, and brilliant eye—indeed, the whole appearance of the count had, at first sight, prepossessed me in his favor. I love everything that is old—provided, of course, it be good—old wine, old rum, and old nobility. I cannot reêcho the cry, so much in fashion with our relative John Bull, who lauds to the skies the very name of Sir Richard Arkwright, for the simple reason that he has accumulated millions at the expense of “*the million*.” I am too proud to envy, and too just to scorn the noble scion of a noble house, simply for the accidents of rank and birth.

No: I would bid them defer their final condemnation of the old federalists, until they clearly perceived the blessings showered on them by their new masters. I would bid them contemplate those enslaved and crippled myriads of human beings, in whom privation and labor have scarcely left the traces of their Maker’s image. I would say to them—but we’ll spare our rhapsodies for another time, and return to our count. There is in him much of the courtier, in the best sense of the word. With what incomparable tact he contrived to allay the feverish excitement into which the unfortunate Vergennes had thrown the entire company! With what amiable magic he exorcised the phantom which the other had so rashly conjured up! How dignified—yet how conciliating the tone of his reply! Not the least temper betrayed itself. Language, voice, gait, dress—everything bespoke the aristocrat of the *ancien régime*, to whom petulance and tears had long been strangers. Chevalier d’Ecars says: “he has seen better days.” In his youth, while at the court of Louis XVI., and while confidant of one of the king’s brothers after the unfortunate monarch’s death, he was trusted with important affairs—he helped to suppress the rebellion in the Vendée, and fought against Westermann, Marceau, Dumas, and Hoche. Moreover, when everything had been lost save honor, he fled to England, and thence to America, where his family still possessed a considerable property in the Attakapas. He then founded a plantation which is now one of the most important in Louisiana, and distinguished for its strict discipline and order. Ultimately, he became so enamored of his position that he refused to return to France, where, after the restoration, his family property was restored, and a considerable indemnity was granted him from the public funds.

Whatever might have been the reasons which influenced him in preferring the evergreen meadows and orange-groves of Attakapas, to the brilliant ante-chambers of the Tuilleries; still his course betrayed decision of character. This man’s *port-feuilles* might present a rich harvest of experience.

He is seated with Mrs. Houston on the sofa, and has drawn Louise after him. A second, which is brought forward, receives Genievre, Lassalle and myself; the rest of the guests group around in small parties, and examine the paintings. D’Ermonville passes into the kingdom of harmony, and loses himself in a stormy symphony of Beethoven. He plays in masterly style, and Vergennes, also, shows great execution.

“It is an astonishing peculiarity,” observes the count, “that this most beautiful, most sublime of all arts, is so little encouraged or practiced among free nations. It is said that music, now-a-days, is less a part of gentlemanly education in France, than formerly—upon the whole, it is less practiced in England than in France, in France less than in Germany, less in Germany than in Italy, and least of all in America. I have never heard of an American statesman, or of any man, occupying a distinguished position, who was a musical amateur.”

“I believe it is particularly, because a certain facility in music requires a loss of time, which must frighten every one who knows the value of his hours. With us, consequently, a good piano-forte player would excite at the same time, pleasure and pity, if not contempt. Fond as we are of seeing artistical perfection in our ladies, we cannot avoid thinking, that a man might employ his time and powers to much better advantage. Moreover, we are very careful not to be carried away by our feelings or passionate excitements; and music, especially, unnerves and unmans us. Sensible and excitable individuals, as well as nations, are not created for liberty. The expression ascribed to Cræsus, contains a great deal of truth: ‘Would you have slaves, give them music.’”

“I believe, upon the whole, you are right,” replied the count. “Pity, that the greatest joys of earth are united with so many sacrifices.”

“Amadeé,” he turned to the old servant, who now began to make his round with coffee—“Amadeé, what are you thinking of?”

"*Pardonnez, monsieur le comte !* I think of many things."

"For instance;" continued the count, sipping his beverage, "were you thinking of the rencontre at St. Florent?"

"No, sir count."

"Or those terrible days at Nantes? Where your sister, and ———, poor boy! — in a boat, with trap-doors twenty feet wide——"

"No, sir count, all this I have tried to forget."

"Yes, yes, my old friend; in your time you have known the count and royal family—the Marquis de Beantieux, and Charette, and Marcigny."

And while he speaks thus, he holds out his hand to his old servant, who grasps it with warmth; and clasping it in both his own, looks with strong emotion into the eyes of the count.

This friendly, almost brotherly intercourse with their servants, is a fine trait in the character of these old Frenchmen, when compared with the mysteriously grand treatment of our relative, John Bull, toward his minions. Our servants are only paid hirelings—tools, while those are children of the house, who participate with childish affection in the family weal or woe.

"So, you have been telling some stories Amadée?" again asked the count.

"At your service, sir count."

"What have you told?"

"Please excuse me."

"Do you know," said the count, turning to us, "that Amadée will not hear of our returning to France?"

"Ah! sir count, you would do right to remain here," murmured the old man.

"Bravo! my good Amadée," interrupted Louise; "you must help us to keep Papa Rossignolles here."

"It needs not much pressing, my dear Louise," he interrupted. "No, my dear child, those who, like me, have measured the heights in their youth, and climbed them until their legs have become weary, are glad to obtain rest in their old age. Moreover, to speak candidly,"—his smiling glance fell upon Baron Lassallé—"to those, who for some time have given themselves up to the comfort of a *robe de chambre*, and partly become backwoodsmen, the Tuilleries would occasion some constraint."

"At first, we should make a strange enough appearance," said Lassalle.

"And then, what might our three hundred negroes say?" added Amadée.

"You're right, Amadée. *La belle France*, returned to its legitimate mon-

archs, can exist without us; but our three hundred poor blacks could not do so easily."

"I am astonished, Monsieur de Rossignolles, how you could adapt yourself so readily to our slave system; it certainly is no easy matter, for an European of the higher class."

My question seemed to puzzle de Rossignolles; he cast one of those glances which may be called indefinable, at Lassalle, and said:

"You are perfectly right, Mr. Howard: for a European, and particularly for *one of us*, it is certainly no easy matter. Even the word *slavery* has for our ears something so painful, and injurious, and insulting, that the very idea is at first painful."

"And how did you overcome the general prejudice?"

The count shrugged his shoulders.

"The dictates of necessity at first; afterward, the conviction that in this sphere an immense deal of good might be done. But what conquered our aversion the most completely was the charm of novelty, and the terribly grand nature of the country we had settled in."

"How?" I asked, "the charm of novelty—the terribly grand nature——"

"I believe," continued the count, "that the sight of the wild shores of Louisiana, near the mouth of the Mississippi, and the scarcely less grand and terrible scenery which surrounded our lands, contributed much—nay, chiefly, to reconcile me to slavery. Bringing with it, as it did at first sight, the conviction that the white man, left to himself, could never succeed in cultivating this country, we were driven to the conclusion, that success depended entirely on the blacks."

After a while he continued:

"I had seen much that was terrible, when, nine-and-twenty years ago, I arrived in Louisiana; but never anything so terrible existing as these immense levels of bogs, mire, and swamp—these thousands of rotting logs—these immense shoals of alligators—these terrible clouds of mosquitoes—this entire chaos—only *beginning* to assume a palpable shape. The culture of such a land seemed an undertaking so immense, that even the terrors of slavery disappeared—nay, in a degree became justified in my sight."

There is much truth in this observation; although, if our slave system could receive no more positive justification, it would prove a lame defence against its opponents.

"Yes, sir count, you often cried: 'Heav-

ens ! and are we to live in this country ? ” added Amadée.

“ And we came just in the worst season of the year, the beginning of July,” observed Lassalle.

“ That, certainly, was a badly chosen time.”

“ We started in the middle of April,” said the count, “ but spent three whole months at sea. Ours was a sorrowful landing, after the long trouble and wants of such a voyage, upon the dismal shores at the mouth of the Mississippi.”

“ And the city—” recommenced Amadée.

“ With its empty, locked-up houses and window-shutters ; filthy streets, filled, instead of pavement, with the remains of various descriptions of animals—gnawed bones and skeletons—at which whole masses of carrion-crows were hacking and pulling, and not a human being to be seen—our ship the only one in the harbor. It was the most melancholy-looking and deserted town I had ever seen. It was a city of the dead, whence everything of life had departed.”

“ With great difficulty,” continued the baron, we at last found an *estaminet*.”

“ At the lower levee, opposite the cathedral.”

“ Pierre Brodain,” again added Amadée.

“ But this tavern, this Pierre Brodain,” observed the count, “ changed the aspect of affairs.”

All three suddenly became much more cheerful.

The baron continues :

“ Just as we came to the door of the inn, it was opened, and two negroes carried out a corpse.”

“ ‘ Courage, Monsieur de Vignerolles ! you see they are making room for us,’ said poor Ducalle,” again added Amadée.

A strange story is this ; atoning, by its originality, for what it wants in connection. It has at least the advantage of authenticity—for three authorities confirm it *viva voce*. The conversation is a kind of trio, particularly lively and rapidly executed. Every one conscientiously contributes his share, “ *takes up his cue*,” as it were, at the right instant, and so keeps the others constantly on the *qui vive*. We are just in that happy state which, with those who have good digestive organs, usually follows a hearty dinner—in that comfortable, good-natured state of listlessness, in which the spiritual organs are satisfied with any kind of intellectual food. We let the trio take its own way.

“ Pierre Brodain,” continued the baron,

turning to both, “ was the blackest son of Bretagne I have ever seen—full of pock-marks, with a thick, Russian, turn-up nose, and a pair of red, rolling fox-eyes. When he saw that we had come ten at once, he measured us for a moment from head to foot, and cried after the negroes to return immediately, and not to undress the corpse, as it had died of the yellow fever ; then he returned to the bar-room, without caring in the least for our immediate necessities or future custom. We stood doubtful,” continued the narrator, “ whether we should enter this yellow-fever hole or not.”

“ Then you made your passage together ? ” I asked.

“ Even so, my dear Mr. Howard,” replied the count. “ We were ten ; de Lassalle, Hauterouge, and Ducalle, with their servants—myself and Amadée, with two other servants. We left Europe eight months after the eighteenth Brumaire. The firmness with which Napoleon seized, and held the reins of government, had put an end to our career. Our parts in France had been played. We had fought for our king, and our patrimonial rights, as long as we saw a tangible opponent ;—the last had disappeared, and we thought the time had come for building us a hut, with the fragments we had saved from the wreck.”

These words were spoken with a certain dignity, which seemed intended to prevent all misconstruction.

De Lassalle again said :

“ Pierre Brodain, you remember, finally condescended to come from behind his filthy bar, and honor us with a few words. When he heard that we were the passengers who had just landed, his fox-like features assumed a cunning smile, and he asked whether we would take up our quarters with him ? We had no choice ; so we entered the bar-room, where a dozen Spaniards, quadroons, and free mulattoes, were drinking and laughing. We were conducted into an adjoining back-room, and took our seats on chairs and benches.”

“ Pierre Brodain,” said the baron, “ again examined us all from head to foot, and drawled out, ‘ *a plait-il*. ’ ”

“ And without waiting a reply,” added the count, “ he ran off, and in a minute returned with a basket of Bordeaux, and a dozen segars.”

“ *Eh bien !* ” continued the baron, who seemed just to have got into the humor of talking—“ we sat down. The promenade through this ugly city, though short, had perfectly exhausted us. The heat was terrible ; the mosquitoes, however—compared to those which had almost driven us to

despair at the mouth of the Mississippi—were here endurable. For the first time, we drank our wine upon the soil of New France.”

“Now come the letters *de recommandation*,” interrupted Amadeé, in a deep tone of voice.

The baron nodded.

“*Eh bien!* as we sat there and drank, giving utterance to sombre thoughts, you, Rossignolles, took out your port-folio, and we followed your example. Pierre Brodain, who had peeped through the door, came in; sneaked for a while around us, like a fox around a hen-coop; looked over the shoulders of Hauterouge and Ducalle, and finally commenced, with a contemptuous glance: ‘Ah! *des lettres de recommandation*—recommendations to Monsieur de Bouligny—not in town, Monsieur de Bouligny; to Baron Marigny, at his country seat—Baron Marigny. Pah!’ And he turned, looked round, and cried again: ‘Pah! Well, very well! the recommendations are good,’ he continued, subjecting each of us to the examination of his lynx-eye.”

“To tell the truth, our toilet was anything but neat; our linen looked as you may naturally suppose it would, after such a voyage. ‘Pah!’ again cried Pierre Brodain to Hauterouge and Ducalle; ‘have you five thousand dollars a year?’ Hauterouge and Ducalle looked at him with astonishment. ‘If you have five thousand a year, well and good! Then, these letters of recommendation will go a great way to help you to some neat demoiselle, a quadroon, or some such companion, to help you eat up your *gourdes*. Pah! there are plenty of messieurs who will give you a lesson on this score.’

“Suddenly he turned to Ducalle, across whose shoulder he had looked into his letter. ‘You are from Bretagne?’ ‘Yes sir,’ replied Ducalle. ‘You have a letter for the Attakapas?’ ‘Yes sir.’ ‘You have received what is called an education?’ ‘I believe so, sir.’ ‘You understand something of chemistry, of surgery, of—of—’ Ducalle looked at the man with astonishment. ‘*Teney, teney!*’ he continued—‘I will tell you something. I, Pierre Brodain, will tell you—leave the city as soon as possible; remove yourself hence, else you will be removed, like him whom you just saw carried out. You have studied chemistry,’ he continued, putting both hands in his vest-pockets, for he had no coat on—‘you have studied chemistry, or, what is the same thing, medicine, for here we are not very particular? Well, I tell

you—I, Pierre Brodain, tell you—go to the Attakapas—in the Attakapas intermitting fevers reign—do you understand? intermitting fevers. Balot!’ he cried, suddenly through the door—‘Balot!’

“‘Balot!’ answered a voice from the bar-room, ‘what do you want with Balot?’ ‘Balot,’ with you, in the Attakapas, intermitting fevers prevail—do n’t they?’ ‘Prevail! they reign continually,’ cried Ballot; ‘new recruits for the intermitting fever. The craps have *bontain*; the alligators have *aleins*; and also *borelus*.’

“Balot, with half a glass of rum, entered at the door to asseverate what he had said, by his personal appearance, which was the most terrible we had ever seen. ‘Pierre Brodain,’ he cried tossing off his glass of rum, and throwing it to the host, who caught it like a trained dog, and ran out.

“And we sat and looked at each other, and at the shirtless, shoeless, and hatless Balot, who was examining us with his drunken stare. Our situation had in it something so desperate, so hopeless—strangers and unacquainted as we were, in this deserted, gloomy, yellow fever city, and amid such people.”

“But did not your captain take care of you?” I asked.

“Captain and sailors,” was the reply, “had disappeared in the first hour after our arrival, to make up by mirth and frolic, as soon as possible, for previous privation.”

“Brodain came again among us, and after offering Ballot the filled glass, he turned to Ducalle, and said: ‘Go you to the Attakapas, that is my advice. There you will cure others, and do well yourself—busy people do business, and make money there. Apropos, have you money?’”

“This question puzzled Ducalle; he again stared at Pierre Brodain with wonder.

“Pierre Brodain looked at Ducalle with a squinting side glance, and continued: ‘Well, you have none; but that’s nothing—makes no difference. You can soon get it—at once, if you like. You have got a gold watch-chain, and I suppose that’s a watch hanging to it; I will advance you twenty *gourdes*, and you leave the chain and watch as pledge. Buy medicines, or I’ll buy them for you. With twenty *gourdes* worth of medicine, you can cure all the Attakapas, if you understand the business. Calomel is the main thing, you understand; so lay in a good supply of calomel. I’ll lend you twenty dollars, and procure your passage besides; I only take five per cent. per month—cheap, because you are a countryman, a Frenchman, and from the Bretagne. We must always be

reasonable with our countrymen; another would not have done it under ten per cent. I will give you a letter to Damien—that's all I can do; the rest is not worth a pica-yune. See that you get off as soon as possible.' 'Yes, see that you get off as fast as possible,' repeated the drunken Balot. And Pierre Brodain, having in this manner dispatched Ducalle, turned to you, Rossingnolles?"

The count nodded.

The baron rises, puts both hands into his vest pockets, and, with a daring, careless mien, approaches the count.

We all look up, wondering what new turn this triologue is about to take.

"You are a nobleman by birth?" asked Lassalle of the count, in a scornful, laughing tone.

"I believe so," replied the other.

The baron cast a half compassionate and half contemptuous side glance at him.

"*Eh, bien*—there are many—there is a great number—come, come. I also was; I was what you are, but no matter—will you go to the Attakapas?"

"I believe we will," was the count's reply.

"To the Attakapas?" again asked the baron, in the character of Pierre Brodain. "To the Attakapas, then—have you money?"

"I've not counted it."

"Not counted it? that's right. I did n't count it when I had none. We do n't count when we have nothing in the purse," said the pseudo Brodain, laughing. "So you'll go to Attakapas, will you? I tell you, Pierre Brodain tells you, you'll do better if you go to Natchitoches. Go to Natchitoches and begin a little store, with powder, lead and silk-ribbons, to trade with the Indians and niggers."

"*Eh bien*," rejoined the count.

"Fix up a store," continued the pseudo Pierre Brodain; "I'll lend you ten dollars—I lend you ten dollars, comrade, and you give me a pledge—five per cent. I'll buy your goods—you understand, eh?"

Saying this, he takes hold of the count's coat button.

"*Chien!*" suddenly cried old Amadée; "*Chien!* you dare talk to the count thus?"

And we look at old Amadée with amazement. That, certainly, is going a little too far. The baron, however, is not to be put off the track of his narrative.

"Pshaw!" he replies, measuring Amadée with a scornful look; "Pshaw, what does that concern you, friend? Better stand in your own shoes; if this man is

satisfied, what does it concern you? if he is not, still it is not your business. If my manners do n't suit you, there is the door," and the baron runs to the door of the saloon and opens it.

"Dost know me?"

Pierre Brodain looks amazed at Amadée, and evidently loses his composure, and stammers: "No, sir! I do not know you!"

"Jacques Pajol!" cried Amadée, louder: "Jacques Pajol, son of the sutler and washerwoman Jeannette, of the Provence regiment. Dost not know Sergeant Amadée?" he cried, raising his stick, and Pierre Brodain confused, half-frightened, shuffles about the room. He, Louis Victor, Count of Vignerolles, colonel of the regiment of Artois, had changed into the drummer, Jacques Pajol, son of the sutler Jeannette.

"Jacques Pajol!" again cried Amadée, raising his stick. "Jacques Pajol, listen to me: our luggage, that of the Count Rossignolles, whose double you are, and of the Barons Lassalle, Hauterouge, and Monsieur de Lassalle, is on board the ship; and if, within the hour said luggage is still on board the ship, and the permit for landing is not obtained, this stick of mine will perform a cotillon on thy back."

"Parbleu!" cried Jacques Pajol; "what do you mean, sergeant?"

"Jacques Pajol!" he repeated dryly, "listen to me! Our luggage, that of the Count Rossignolles, whose double you are, and of the Barons Lassalle, Hauterouge, and Monsieur de Lassalle, is on board the ship; and if, within an hour said luggage is still remaining there, and the permit for landing the same be not obtained, this stick of mine will dance a cotillon on thy back."

"Pierre Brodain, *alias* Jacques Pajol, *ci devant* Louis Victor, Count of Vignerolles, Baron de Pierrepont, Chevalier de Mazanars, master of the Pont Bleu domains and the silver mines of Blois —" continued the baron, who, seating himself with the most ludicrous air of importance, and far from being confounded at the discovery of his original character, immediately put a good face on a bad business—ran to Amadée, pressed his hands, made a thousand bows and scrapes to the count, and seemed all joy and delight at having been relieved of his double character.

Amadée again interrupted the merri-ment of the rascal:

"Most gracious master of the domains of Pont Bleu, as said before, we must trouble you to go to the custom-house and obtain our luggage from this worldly *hermandad*;

otherwise, our stick will unavoidably have to dance a minuet on your back."

"What!" cried Jacques Pajol; "here, in my own house?"

"At all events, we might try it," interrupted Jean, who was not much in the humor of joking.

"Chevalier de Mazanares!" cried the servant of Hauterouge.

"Master of the silver mines of Blois!" added Lassalle's man.

The whole company is grouped around the three actors. These Frenchmen are born actors.

"Ah!" continued the baron, approaching the count, who, with supercilious *nonchalance* reclines on the sofa—"ah! we also—yes, we too could tell something of noble ancestry, of life at court. We also, who were colonel in the regiment of Artois, count, baron, chevalier, owner of domains, silver-mines——"

"In the regiment of Artois? May I ask your name?" said de Vignerolles.

"Louis Victor comte de Rossignolles, Baron de Pierpont, Chevalier de Mazanares," trumpeted forth the pseudo Pierre Brodain.

"So I have the honor, to speak with count Louis Victor de Vignerolles?" asked the count.

"With the Count Louis Victor," replied Pierre Brodain; "with Louis Victor de Vignerolles, owner of the domains of Pontbleu, and of the silver-mines of Blois."

"The silver-mines of Blois!" again asked the count. "In what part of the world are these silver-mines of Blois situated?"

The baron becomes furious.

"What!" he cried; "would you make fun of Pierre Brodain; and pretend not to know the silver-mines of Blois? You pretend to be a Frenchman? A pretty Frenchman you are!"

And we all look at the mock cabaret-keeper, and burst into loud laughter.

Old Amadée jumps up with his cane, and cries to the baron:

"Away with you!"

"Jacques Pajol was tossed like a ball from one hand into the other. '*Ma foi, morbleu!*' he cried; 'but who will attend to my *estaminet*? 'All of us!' cried our servants.

"Jacques, however, scratched his head, and Ducalle ended the argument by proposing to receive the picayunes for him. After he had initiated him in the art of preparing sangaree and toddy, sling and cocktail, juleps and cobblers, he toddled off."

"It was the first pleasant hour we pass-

ed in Louisiana," observed de Haute-rouge.

"It was really pleasant," said de Lassalle; "that hour seemed, to a certain degree, a happy prediction of our fate in the new world. And really, we needed such encouragement; helpless, as we were, in a pestilential town, deserted by all its respectable inhabitants; and where only the lowest dregs of earth's population remained, to fatten, like carrion-crows, upon those unfortunate victims, whom accident should throw in their way."

"We still sat laughing over our Bordeaux, which reflects no discredit upon the *estaminet*, when Jacques returned with a small, lean Spaniard—for, you know, at the time of our arrival, Louisiana was still under Spanish dominion.

"The *hidalgo* was dressed in a brown coat, which he must have preserved from the time when he studied at Salamanca, for his arms protruded six inches beyond the wrist of the sleeves; his spindle-shanks were enveloped in plain-colored, and much-worn, short breeches. On his entrance, he touched his three-cornered hat, with much official dignity, gave us his long name, and his longer title, of which I only remember, '*Don Henriquez*,' and then, as if expecting an answer, stared at us.

"We all had risen. De Vignerolles complimented the Don, who seemed anything but talkative. After the first salutations, he asked whether his excellency Don Salceda, the governor, was in town?

"His excellency, the civil politician, and also the military governor general of the provinces of Louisiana and West Florida, are on the tour of inspection to the forts," replied the Spaniard, who, while speaking of his excellency, had respectfully taken off his hat and ceremoniously replaced it. '*Pardon!*'—Vignerolles excused himself,—'we have a *lettra di raccomandacion* to his excellency, and are very sorry not to be able to present ourselves to him.'

"These words somewhat reconciled his piqued Castilian pride, so that Vignerolles ventured to ask whether the chief intendant of the royal treasury was in the city.

"The *hidalgo*, replied: 'His eminence, the chief intendant of the royal customs of the provinces of Louisiana and West Florida, also intendant of the domains of the crown, and also judge of the admiralty, and chief of the chamber of commerce of said provinces, is in the country.'

"'*Pardon*,' again said Vignerolles, excusing himself, 'we have a patent of

lands in the Attakapas, granted by his majesty, Louis XV.; and wish particularly to observe the necessary forms of law, on entering into possession of said lands."

"His excellency, Don Marino Nicola Vidal Charez Fanavarri de Madrigal Valdez, civil Governor *Lugarteniente*, also military auditor in the provinces of Louisiana and West Florida, further, chief justice, etc., etc., is in town, but lives retired from all business."

"Instead of giving an answer, Vignerolles played with a couple of gold pieces between his fingers.

"The Spaniard did not change a feature, but with real Castillian *grandezza*, he approached close to Vignerolles. 'He is not to be seen on any account,' replied the other, in the same measured tone; 'the only exception is, when Don Henriquez finds the affairs of state of sufficient importance to interrupt his excellency's valuable hours.'

"Vignerolles dropped a *louis d'or* into his hand. The Spaniard examined the piece, and continued, dryly: 'It needs another condition to see his excellency.'

"Vignerolles let a second slip from his fingers. '*Muy bien*,' replied the Spaniard; 'but the señores, would have their baggage landed? Does it please you to fulfil the condition at once, or——?'

"Vignerolles found himself again compelled to put his fingers in his purse. 'Two conditions are sufficient,' asserted the phlegmatic servant of his Catholic majesty.

"These conditions being fulfilled, the hidalgo bowed, took his hat, and with the words, '*Venio Señores*,' he walked gravely through the bar-room, to the door, and thence toward the levee.

"We followed, and received our luggage, which lay ready on deck. While our people were busy with the assistance of the negroes, whom Pajol had sent with us, to bring our effects to the estaminet, the hidalgo beckoned Vignerolles to follow him. I have forgotten to observe, that our captain, immediately after the landing of the vessel, had disappeared with our passports, and left the ship in the care of a couple of sailors.

"The Spaniard now inquired which of us was the Chevalier Mazanares? The circumstance that one of the ancestors of Vignerolles was a Spanish nobleman, had certainly contributed greatly to make our stiff guide so pleasant—that is to say, pleasant in the *Spanish fashion*. To me, he only granted permission to follow, and that after repeated assurances of my being like-

wise a caballero. We went down St. Louis-street—which, filled with the most disgusting offal, was almost impassable—into the rue Rampart; and I assure you, that this short walk was sufficient to destroy our regained good-humor. It was perfectly incomprehensible to me, how human beings could live in an atmosphere so completely infected. But then, to be sure, we saw no human beings; but behind the houses in the rue Rampart, whole armies of alligators, and other nameless animals, were creeping in the ditches. These were the only living things that met our view. The houses were mostly built of mere *rez de chaussée*, with broad, projecting roofs. We stopped before one which was about thirty feet distant from the street.

"The Spaniard looked significantly at us, put his finger to his lips, and ordered us to stand aside, with the words, 'His grace is taking recreation, after the tiresome affairs of state.' He then went up to the house, which looked like a barrack, and knocked at the door. A rough, yelling voice inquired: '*Que es eso?*' 'Don Henriquez,' rejoined our guide.

"In a short time the door was opened, and our guide spoke the words: '*Ave Maria purissima*.' The person who opened the door answered, laughing: '*Sine peccado concebada*;' and the door closed again.

"We stood for some moments, our looks fixed on the ominous door. It was again opened; our guide stepped in, and after beckoning us to proceed, he walked before us, and introduced us into a tolerably large but incredibly dirty room.

"On a chair, which stood behind a table upon which lay corsets and musquito-fans, old breeches, glasses with remains of pineapple punch, garters, and such other things, sat the person to whom we, or rather the Caballero de Mazanares, was introduced, with a deep bow. He wore knee-breeches, open at the knee, but no stockings; one of his feet was dressed in an old slipper, the other was bare. Over his shirt he had a black coat, on his head a three-cornered hat, and, although sitting, had a sword belted to his side. This was his excellency, the vice-gobernador—*en passant*, be it said, the most disagreeable ape to look upon I ever encountered in all my life. 'Don Mazanares,' he began, to Vignerolles. The latter nodded, and after some preliminary compliments, handed our parchments to him.

"The señor threw another magisterial look at us, then winked to Don Henriquez, who handed him his spectacles, which his excellency gravely adjusted on his nose;

after which he read our documents. This took about five minutes. Without saying another word, he rose, and with his right hand swept from the table all the named and nameless things which lay upon it, leaving only the punch-bowl and glasses—so that the floor of the dirty apartment was completely strewn. Having performed this feat, he sat down again.

“*Por todos los Demoneos!*” shrieked the same rough, yelling voice, which we had already heard; and a glass-door, that led into the adjoining apartment, opened, and forth issued a creature whose appearance almost put us out of our senses. “*Caracoco!*” she cried, louder: “*Que querer decir eso? El viejo no vale!*”

“Our señor seemed to be a little disturbed by this unexpected appearance, but only a little—although he had reason to be a great deal more; for the beauty who came running in, in such an unceremonious way, was a mulatto! and in mulattoishable! but still young and very corpulent.

“*Que es este?*” asked his excellency, the vice-gobernador, taking a pinch of snuff with Castilian apathy, and looking inquiringly at the mulatto. “*Que es este?*” she repeated, in great fury—“*que es este? En Verdad,*” and she turned off—“*El babo viejo no vale.*” And then she bent down to pick up the chemises, corsets, and mosquito-fans, which she did with the most astonishing *sans gêne*, and then turned, just as she was, merely in her chemise, toward Don Henriquez. “*Ah! caro mio, como estamos? Que hay de nuevo? Estramos?*” And she glanced at us with most libidinous eyes.

“*Seas decente,*” spoke his excellency, with the same dull apathy, taking a second pinch—“*Seas decente, y manda por me Padre, y trae un puerco, en don de echar el demonio.*”^{*} And saying this, he gravely left his seat and went up to her; but she repulsed the hand with which he was about to take hers, and, with the words “*gasta calconis,*” she disappeared, laughing, behind the door.

“Without changing a feature, we endured the sharp rat-glance of the old debauchee, and we did well. Without saying a word, he sat down again. Don Henriquez drew from his coat-pocket, pen and ink-stand; the old fellow signed the documents, which he handed to the latter, with orders to affix to it the seal of the state. With a *buen viaje* he dismissed us, and locked the door.

“Now we had an opportunity of laughing at the exceedingly grotesque appearance

of the second representative of his Catholic majesty in the provinces of Louisiana and West Florida, the well-known Vidale, who imprinted such a mark of disgrace on the otherwise humane government of Spain, by his boundless avarice and baseness; but the desire of laughter soon passed. There was something so unnatural in this horrible caricature of vice, that we hurried as if driven by the fury of pestilence back to our estaminet, our thoughts concentrated on one point—we would depart as quickly as possible out of this horrible city. We had no sooner reached our friends, than we informed them of our resolution to leave immediately for the Attakapas. All were highly satisfied, and our departure was fixed upon the next morning at daybreak. Pajol received the order to enter into arrangements with Balot.

“But Pajol shook his head, and declared he would have nothing to do with our departure; and that we should do better to send off our recommendations, and await the answers.

“This could not easily be done, as the waiting for the answers would necessarily take some days, and every hour’s delay, unacclimated as we were, was fraught with danger. We remarked this to Pajol, and reminded him of his former anxiety that we should leave as quickly as possible.

“Pajol became somewhat confused, but still continued to urge our awaiting answers to our letters; and should we not like to stay in New-Orleans, we might go over to Lake Pontchartrain. ‘And meanwhile leave our baggage in your hands?’ inquired Amadeé, slapping the man’s shoulder. ‘Better your goods remained in New Orleans than yourselves,’ said Pajol, who seemed to have lost his good spirits even in a greater degree than ourselves. There was now something so rough, repulsive, and restless about this man, that must have struck us if, in our eagerness, we had been capable of any other thought than that of getting away as quickly as possible. ‘In short,’ I said, ‘you will close with Balot, who has offered to bring us to the Attakapas.’ ‘Or—’ interrupted Amadeé, raising his stick.

“But Pajol was not to be intimidated by his threat. ‘I wont have anything to do with your departure,’ was his constant answer. ‘You will do best to send off your letters and get your friends to provide you an opportunity to reach the Attakapas. If you want to go with Balot, you may; but I will not lend a hand to that scheme.’

“We looked at each other. Something

^{*} Be decent, and send for a priest, and have a hog brought in, that the former may drive the devil out of thee into the latter.

was wrong, that was certain; but who can examine closely, when placed in a situation such as ours?

"Vignerolles took the man aside, and inquired into the causes of this sudden change of opinion—whether Balot was a suspicious character—he begging him to speak openly.

"Pajol turned off, and grumbled something, which I only half understood—it was something about nine inches of cold iron; then he turned again to Vignerolles, and assured him that Balot was taking hundreds to the Attakapas, but that he would advise us to go to the other shore of the Pontchartrain, where we would have nothing to fear from yellow-fever.

"We turned dissatisfied from the man, with whom neither request nor remonstrance was of any avail. That moment the wild Balot entered, and casting a distrustful, inquiring glance at Pajol, who became still more confused, said: 'Messieurs, I take you to the Attakapas?'

"Pajol stood next to me, and whispered into my ear: 'Do not go with Balot, go over the lake.'

"Balot stood staring at us, but evidently much more sober than could have been anticipated, after the immense quantity of spirits he had taken.

"I had become thoughtful, and our old friend, Amadeé, who whispered his objections into my ear, was still more so. Meanwhile, Vignerolles had commenced negotiations with our patron; who had bound himself to be next morning at five o'clock at the levee, with his *voiture*, and to bring the necessary crew along, which was to consist of ten rowers, a boatswain, and himself as captain. His demand was one dollar per day for each rower, two for the boatswain, and three for himself. The affair was quickly closed. From time to time Balot looked around at Pajol, who had been anxiously running in and out, and once had pressed close to Amadeé, and dropped something into his hand. I observed every motion of the man.

"Balot had received ten dollars upon the bargain; for the remainder, a check was to be drawn. Before these things could be arranged, in which we found some difficulty, as the man wanted payment in advance, to pay his debts to Pajol and to a certain *crochet*, Amadeé found time to cast a glance at the paper which he had recently received. Immediately he stepped up to Balot, 'Balot!' said he, 'what way do you intend to take?'

"Balot cast an inquiring look at Amadeé, and a furious one around the room;

but Pajol had disappeared. The man now became a most suspicious character in my eyes. 'What way?' he cried—'what other way than the nearest and best? or the one by which my *voiture* and my passengers may come soonest to the place we want to bring them to.'

"These words were spoken in a scornful and contemptuous tone. 'And this way?' inquired Amadeé again. 'What have you to do with the way?' he bawled with a horse-laugh. 'You go the way your master goes; that gentleman,' pointing to the count, 'has closed the bargain.' 'Not so fast, Balot,' I interrupted; 'Amadeé is our old friend, and what he says, we repeat. Is it not so, Vignerolles?'

"Vignerolles confirmed it. 'And this way goes through the bayou La Fourche?' repeated Amadeé. 'No,' replied Amadeé, 'that way we don't go; we go by the bayou Plaquemine.' 'Then you may go alone, I stay,' he replied abruptly. 'So you may,' I replied, as a suspicion had already darkly passed through my breast, although the objection of Amadeé, who preferred the bayou Plaquemine to the bayou La Fourche, appeared somewhat strange to me. During the fourteen days which we spent in coming up from the mouth of the Mississippi to New Orleans, we had often spoken with the captain and sailors about the best manner of trading from the capital to the Attakapas, and had been informed, that the bayou La Fourche, streaming into the Mississippi, twenty-seven miles above New-Orleans, was the better way; whereas that of Plaquemine, requires a voyage of thirty-nine miles up the Mississippi, and would take us two more days. But this very circumstance would have made the latter route more profitable for the patron, and his refusal to take it was the more suspicious.'

"'But what do you think of all at once, Amadeé?' inquired the count of our old friend. 'I believe, sir count, we will do best, to send off our letters, and go over the Lake Pontchartrain, as Balot refuses to go through the Plaquemine.'

"I joined the motion, and Vignerolles, who now began to understand that Amadeé must have serious grounds to make him so suddenly change the plan of our journey, consented also.

"Balot looked daggers alternately at Amadeé and myself. 'Pshaw!' he cried, at last. 'At least I have ten dollars, which nobody can take from me, and which will just do for a spree at Crochets.' And the men left with a roaring and scornful laugh, to have a spree at Crochets.

"We looked after him," continued the baron, "as helplessly as wrecked seamen, who behold the saving ship approach and vanish; and it was some time after he had gone that we, almost in anger, fell upon Amadeé, to know why he had betrayed our hopes of getting away from this infected and infernal city.

"Instead of an answer, Amadeé pointed to the paper which Pajol had put into his hands. The following words were scribbled on 'it in pencil: *Do not go through the bayou la Fourche, go through the bayou Placquemine. Balot is a quadroon, and his rowers are all negroes and mulattoes.* 'Pshaw!' cried Lassalle, 'what of that? Quadroon or white is the same, Pajol is a fool. A quadroon is as good as a white man.'

"You know that the negro mania was, at that time, the fashionable hobby-horse in France," remarks the baron.

"Pajol spoke through the door: 'Monsieur! if you are alive six weeks hence, you will not call Pajol a fool.'

"We called him in, and entreated him to explain himself more distinctly; but he decidedly refused. He thought he had already done more than he could answer for to Balot and his companions; he could say nothing, but that Balot and his company were colored, and that planters liked better to travel on the Mississippi and the bayous, with Acadiens.' And he called his negroes, who began to lay our supper table, and bring in the dishes.

"We sat down, but the dishes, as well as the wines, disgusted us. It did not need the repeated entreaty of Pajol to be moderate in eating. We could absolutely eat nothing but vegetables and a few slices of ham; the heat, too, was suffocating.

"As we were sitting thus, Balot entered the door again. 'Messieurs!' he cried; 'I'll take you through the bayou Placquemine, but it costs half as much more.' 'You receive what is agreed upon,' said Amadeé, 'one dollar for the rowers, two for the boatman, and three for yourself.' 'Well, then, we'll leave to-morrow, at six o'clock.'

"We were satisfied. Vignerolles wrote the check, which was payable after our arrival at our destination, at our bankers in New-Orleans; and Balot went out to collect his crew.

"Are you provided with arms?" inquired Pajol of me, after some time, as if accidentally. 'With pistols, double-barrelled guns, and cavalry swords.' 'The latter are very good,' he replied, 'but nothing compared to daggers on postrures. You

must have daggers also.' 'Do you think that we will have to use them?' 'That, it is impossible to predict,' rejoined Pajol, leaving the estaminet.

"I communicated to my friends what he had whispered to me. His promise to go, however, as I had thought it would, in one moment dispersed all our gloomy thoughts.

"We wished to escape from the infected atmosphere and hot vapors, at any price; this expectation we had now, and in addition a fight on hand, which would make us forget fever and heat. Pajol came and brought six Spanish daggers, which we had to exchange for as many piastres. Notwithstanding all this, merriment and courage had returned, and amid peals of laughter we finished our supper, and looked for our berths, which had been prepared in the barn alongside of our boxes and bales—for we had very excusable doubts about trusting ourselves to the beds of Pajol, although he had most seriously assured us that the rooms had been aired, and the blankets and tillandsea mattresses burned, or thrown into the Mississippi, whenever any yellow fever death had occurred. Spite of mosquitoes, bralots, and other nameless insects, we slept more quietly than we had done for three months.

"Amadeé alone, did not share our indifference. He had remained awake. Before daybreak he came to our couches; shook Vignerolles, Hauterouge, and myself awake, and beckoned us to follow him. Half asleep as we were, we followed, and Lassalle came immediately after us.

"What news, Amadeé?" 'I believe it is best we go over lake Ponchartrain.' 'What the d—l do you think of, now the bargain is concluded?' Amadeé shook his head. 'They are colored people—do not trust them. I have just been in the tavern, and I do n't like them!' 'I can understand this; you never did like colored people since the times of the Massiac club!' added Lassalle. 'We are unacquainted here,' replied Amadeé, who seemed not to have heard the reproach—'these men may take us whither they like, and none will be the wiser. Let us send our letters, sir count—the least these men can do is to get us an opportunity to reach the Attakapas.' 'Have you heard anything?' we asked. 'I remained in the tavern to speak with Pajol about the necessary provisions—what I heard there did not please me,' replied Amadeé. 'And what did you hear?' we asked. 'Only our names—I could not understand their Creole jargon!' 'Pah! Amadeé, you are not usually so

cowardly! 'Ten Frenchmen certainly cannot fear twelve mulattoes!' cried Hauterouge. 'It is a point of honor with us to go, we would be laughed at else!' 'For my part, I am determined to go with these people,' said Lassalle. 'And so am I!' rejoined Hauterouge.

"Myself and Vignerolles were undecided; but now Balot came, and the thought of exposing ourselves before these men removed all hesitation. We began to bring our luggage to the levee and on board the vessel, whither we followed, like persons who don't know certainly whether they are awake or dreaming.

CHAPTER IV.

DEBATE ON SLAVERY.

AND a short pause ensues, which is interrupted by Vergennes, who, half laughing, whispers to d'Ermonvalle.

"*Ma foi!* did you ever hear of such things? 'Ten Frenchmen, who don't know rightly whether they are awake or dreaming, while they——'"

And he stops and looks at d'Ermonvalle, and then on the company; which, at this moment, is in a state difficult to pronounce, of dreaming or waking. Some study the Plafond, others smile at the pictures on the wall; the faces of all are covered with a delicate blush, and with that vacant stare in the swimming eyes, which indicates too strong a temptation of the digestive powers—all were in the most amiable *far niente*, which seemed about to resolve into a moderate agitation. We Americans looked inquiringly at Lassalle, and that same scornful smile played around our mouths, which was seen in the face of Vergennes. Hauterouge quickly took a pinch.

"But could you find no other accommodation?" began d'Ermonvalle, interposing.

"Find other accommodations?" rejoined Lassalle. "Do you think you can find accommodations in plenty, where the yellow fever reigns? where no ship, or boat is to be seen, and where the few inhabitants who remain behind, are locked up in their houses as in besieged fortresses, while only a few hundred wretches move about, like jackalls and vultures?"

"That we received the audience of Don Valdez, was a mere chance, and only to be ascribed to Vignerolles's doubloons, and to the fact, that one of his ancestors had received the *Titulo de Castilia*. But what

else can be said? You must have known New-Orleans at the time when the yellow-fever and Spaniards prevailed.

"Furthermore, you must not forget to judge fairly of our position or conduct," remarked Hauterouge, sharply; "that we were neither on a philanthropic negro frolic, nor on a medical observation-voyage. We had not come to inquire into the equalities of the yellow fever, but to keep it as far as possible from us: in short, we had come to settle in a country, which was described to us as a land of milk and honey, and which now received us in a manner, which would have made even Monsieur de Vergennes lose his temper. *Parbleu!* there is a great difference between Nouvelle Orleans of 1799, and that of 1828."

"It still remains incomprehensible to me—ten Frenchmen! and Frenchmen of good family! But, certainly, ten blacks present an ominous, not to say alarming appearance," remarked Vergennes.

This Vergennes is a really malignant scoffer.

"The Americans, my dear Vergennes," continues the count, "have a proverb, which says—the European is seven years blind in America: and if you stay here, you will learn that this proverb contains much truth. We at least, I must acknowledge, were blind when we arrived, and remained so for a good length of time, embarrassed in a way which was almost like a dream. Our servants felt this much less than we; but this was very natural. We had left circumstances which I might call abstract, in comparison with those we were about to enter, which were of a concrete nature. Our positions in Europe, although not unimportant, had not often brought us in contact with the people, except as commanders. We were, in a measure, wheels, which moved a machine for which others thought, and which again brought others into action. As courtiers and commanding officers, we could appear at court, and at a *grand* and *petit levee*; command regiments and battalions, write verses, and criticise tragedies, comedies and novels. We understood a little of chemistry and astronomy; and, I may say, we hoped to find in Louisiana, if not a compensation, at the least an agreeable place of refuge: but what we had already seen only destroyed, bitterly, all our expectations."

"But this conclusion was somewhat too rash, Monsieur de Vignerolles," I remarked.

"But, dear Mr. Howard, the endurance of man has always its bounds. Whoever has fought struggled, endured and

suffered as much as we had in the ten years of our Revolution, begins to despair. The strongest ships can stand out two or three successive storms; but if these storms constantly return—now from the west, again from the east, and anon from the south and from the north; then, not only will the rudder break, but the sails tear, and the masts and planks even begin to give way. So with the mind of man—it begins to shake, to despair; and if it comes to that, then farewell to comfort and calmness!”

“Then comes restlessness, which throws one into the claws of men like Balot and his company,” interrupted Lassalle.

“Who for ten days, with his mulattoes, tortured us almost to death, and on the eleventh left us on a snag, in the middle of bayou Plaquemine; surrounded with bogs and swamps, among alligators and snapping-turtles,” concluded Hauterouge, in a fury.

“How! he left you on a snag in the bayou Plaquemine?” we inquired, with subdued laughter.

It was indelicate and malicious in us, but we could not keep from laughing. Ten Frenchmen run upon a snag!

“*Ma foi!*” recommences Hauterouge; “when I recollect that night, I believe I could, in cold blood, break the necks of the ten rascals with pleasure.”

“Tell us all about it,” begged we Americans, not a little pleased with the tragicomic adventures of these Frenchmen.

“What can there be told?” replied the baron, a little discomposed. “It was a *sottise*, a *bêtise*, to confer with this kind of men. I get furious, even now, when I think of it. We had the most miserable passage that ever was made up the Mississippi: we had to thank our stars, and our extraordinary labor, that we came up at all. We had to work like galley-slaves, and row like sailors; for these lazy, obstinate beasts would absolutely do nothing but drink their fills, and played us every imaginable trick besides. After we had wearied ourselves for ten days like beasts, on the eleventh day they ran us upon a cypress log, which was lying across the river—the bow hanging over one side of the log, and the stern over the other, so that we sat perfectly *à cheval* on the river.”

“The vessel had received a large leak, through which the water rushed in streams, and in a quarter of an hour was up to our middle,” says Lassalle, in a most afflicted tone of voice.

“The whole night,” added Hauterouge,

in the same tone, “we had to fight with the alligators, which, by dozens, raised their terrible jaws up to us, and even came into the boat. Besides these, the horrible Mississippi owls were flying against our heads, with their fiendish laughter.”

“Balot and his mulattoes had, as soon as they saw our misfortune, taken possession of the yawl,” added Lassalle again.

“And you let them keep the yawl?” we asked.

“Who thought of the yawl? We never thought of it, until we saw them leaving the boat, laughing at us.”

“They had the impudence to ask a thousand dollars for our deliverance.”

“Ah, that night!” lamented Hauterouge again; “it was the most terrible I ever experienced. Only think, not a moment of rest—fighting the whole night, and against what? against alligators and owls!”

“And the men you had engaged?”

“Had disappeared with a bale of goods belonging to the count, and which was worth a thousand livres. We would certainly have answered them for their impudent demands, but the charges of our guns and pistols had become wet. Afterward, we heard that this had been the speculation they intended to make on us.”

It is with great difficulty that we refrain from laughing; for this is a stupendous story, at least to us Americans, as each one of us has been subject to dangers and privations, in comparison to which those of the good Frenchmen are child’s play. Ten Frenchmen to be tortured by ten mulattoes, and then to be run upon the trunk of a tree in Plaquemine bayou, deserve really to be given to posterity in the shape of a wood-cut! But it is ever thus with these Frenchmen—to-day merry and in high spirits, and to-morrow sullen and in despair.

They have, as the count very justly remarked, learned all—the chemical affinities, astronomy, and they can criticise comedies and tragedies; but they do not understand mankind. They never come to a clear, quick comprehension of their position, and for this same reason, they never know precisely what they are about; and as soon as their circumstances change, they are like new-born children, which have to be in leading-strings. Into every position, however new or strange, they bring their old ideas; they treat as trifles serious matters, and serious matters as trifles. So they have done in Louisiana, and so they do still. The miserable city had scarcely been raised, when a theatre must be erected. Then followed gambling-houses, and ball-

houses, and still worse houses. And this they called civilizing the country!

"But, good Heavens!" inquired Mrs. Houston of Lassalle, who looked most distressed, "could you not help yourselves? At that time there were surely some plantations on the Mississippi?"

"We came from New-Orleans," replied he, "where the yellow fever prevailed. Nobody would have anything to do with us—and if even any person came near us, while we held our dinner or supper on shore, the words: '*De pauvres Blancs*,' or '*des Français de St. Domingue*,' were sufficient to drive them away from us."

"That was really sad. Unfortunately, the Creoles of those times did not show themselves very generous to their unhappy fellow-subjects of St. Domingo."

"Better say 'barbarian-like!' madam; inhuman and cruel, they indeed showed themselves. That period will for ever remain a blot of disgrace upon the not very glorious history of Louisiana."

"The consequences of slavery," adds Vergennes, who let himself be heard again, "which suffocates every human feeling, and transforms to monsters alike, the masters and the slaves. The conduct of these engagés is a fresh proof. What can you expect of men, spoiled by the pressure of slavery, excited by the disgrace which accompanies it? What can you expect other than revenge, and to see them, on each and every occasion, practice their treachery upon their white foes? These are the consequences of an inhuman system."

The man speaks like a professor, with all his assurance and gravity. Some new debates will ensue. Lassalle impatiently interrupts him:

"With your everlasting system—why do you talk about the system? The true system would have been, to have brought half-a-dozen of cowhides instead of daggers and pistols, and have introduced them into close acquaintance with the backs of the rascals."

"Fie!" cries Vergennes.

"What do you mean by your fie?" interrupts again Hauterouge. "On the third day after our departure, we were on the *côte des Allemands*; we met a boat, which crossed the river from the left to the right shore. It was calm, and the stream was like a mirror. Balot was just measuring out the filet. We had gone ashore to eat our supper. The strange boat was not a hundred feet from the shore, when Balot suddenly cried to the man at the helm: '*à droite, à droite*.' The same moment a strong breeze was felt. The patron in the

strange boat, on hearing this cry, turns involuntarily to the right, without thinking that he gives his broadside to the wind; a cry from the boat was heard, but too late—the current of air has caught it, whirled it over and over, and the next ten seconds we see it thrown a wreck on shore, the planter half killed, two negroes drowning before our eyes, a boy lifting his little white hands out of the water with a cry, and sinking. All this passed before our eyes."

"And did you not seize the villain, bind him, and deliver him up to the laws, or to the first planter you came to?"

"He was quicker than we. He and his company hardly saw what they had done, when they jumped, laughing like demons, into the vessel, and cried out to us to do the same, or they would leave us. We had to follow and row all night to escape pursuit."

"And you went with these people?" again asked Mrs. Houston.

Lassalle shrugged his shoulders: "What could we do?"

"This only confirms what I have said," commences again the systematic Vergennes. "If you want men and not mischievous monkies, you must treat them like men."

"Go to the d——!" burst out the baron. "I crave your pardon, ladies, but our obstinate countryman seems to have made it his intention to put our politeness and our patience to the proof. We did not hurt these villains in the least; no more did the poor planter, his boy, or the negroes."

"But they were whites, to whom the blacks had sworn hostility, even in their mother's womb. Can you expect humanity of degenerated creatures, who, in each of us sees but a future oppressor? Alas! a land which boasts of its freedom, and in which, nevertheless, every citizen is the privileged tyrant of an unfortunate race."

"Impertinent fellow!" cried Doughby, Richards and myself, and at the same time jumped up toward the young man. I had become really angry—and who would not, at such an impertinent challenge?

"Monsieur, you throw a compliment in the teeth of our nation, for which, at least, we shall not owe you our thanks."

"Just as you like," replied the young man, stretching out his legs, and overlooking us superciliously from head to foot.

I began to boil with wrath. Papa and Louise were both holding my arms.

Richards interferences, more composedly: "What do you mean, by the words tyranny

and tyrant? I think tyrants are only men who, without right, and in an unlawful manner, usurp a despotism over their fellow men, and exercise it at their pleasure?"

"A definition which no encyclopædia could give better," rejoins the insolent boy, half yawning.

"Indeed," I whispered to papa, biting my lips, "your amiable nephew sins heavily, and presumes greatly on his relationship to your house."

"Then permit me to tell you, in the most civil way," continued Richards, "that your expressions are not at all suited to the position of our slaves and their proprietors. Do you know in what way we came into the possession of our slaves?"

"The way it was done makes no difference."

"Yes," rejoined Richards; "the ways and means of gaining possession of a property, designates the right of holding it. That you ought to know as a *principle*, man."

"Oh! the *jeune France*," began Haute-rouge, "does not care much about principles, if they do not suit its creed."

"Well, and what was this way?" inquires Vergennes, with a drawling and scornful expression.

"You ought to have become acquainted with it, before you pronounced so harsh a sentence on a nation whose hospitality you enjoy," interrupted Monteville, with some malice. "Monsieur," he added, "you were what we call *impoli*."

Up bounds Vergennes, like our Indians when they hear the war-whoop. The champagne vapors, which had been lying slightly on his brow, disappeared at once. He will not be "*impoli*."

"Silence! dear nephew," says Papa Menou; "you deserved this lesson. You were really *impoli*. Sit down."

And the Hotspur sits down, and we sit down also, and Richards assumes an oratorical face. To me the whole appears a little ridiculous, although it might have become serious.

"What Monsieur de Monteville has remarked," he begins, "is certainly a strong historical fact."

"And one fact is worth more than a thousand arguments," interrupted Doughby.

"Silence, Doughby! this discussion is of importance."

"Our slaves have actually been forced upon us," continues Richards, "and therefore we are not in the least responsible for the existence of the evil among us."

"Permit me, messieurs, to show you,

briefly and historically, the origin of slavery in the United States.

"You know that, less than sixty years ago, we were still under the crown of Great Britain, which monopolized the right of regulating commerce in her colonies; and she did so to an extent, calculated to hold the colonies as long as possible in dependence on the mother country. All the acts of parliament prove this, as they aim entirely at the support of the commerce of the subjects living in Great Britain, and at the diminution, if not total destruction, of that of the colonists in America. They had not, and were not permitted to have, any large vessels—only coasters were allowed them. The commerce on the high seas was retained for the subjects of his Britannic majesty, living in the United Kingdom; and these alone had the monopoly to import and export, to and from the colonies, such articles as were permitted by government.

"One of these permitted imports, soon after the colonies had attained some wealth, was the importation of African negro slaves. The first importation was made by a Holland vessel in 1620, with consent of the British government; which, however, soon monopolized this whole commerce, and permitted it only by British vessels, fitted up in British ports, and belonging to British subjects—in a word, it became a most perfect monopoly. Against this commercial monopoly, the colonists dare not object; but they strongly opposed the importation of the slaves themselves.

"It did not escape them, that the importation of these black Africans—who, like other goods in the market, were sold like tea, sugar or spices—would introduce slavery, and perpetuate it in their land; the arrival of the first slave-ships, therefore, caused universal alarm. The colonies immediately came to the conclusion, to remonstrate with the British parliament against this inhuman traffic. They did so: they begged and prayed the crown to relieve them of the importation of negroes, and the consequently inevitable slavery. Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia did so, and other colonies followed their example.

"To give you an idea of the earnestness of these protestations, and the desperate perseverance of the petitioners, it will suffice to allude to the example of Georgia. This colony was the youngest, and last of the great settlements established under the English government. The foundation falls within the last deceniums of the first half of the eighteenth century, a

period, when the barbarism of the middle ages had already been dispelled by the light of civilization; and statesmen had begun to assume more humane principles. The excellent Oglethorpe was the founder, and first governor. Hardly had the colony been formed, when British slavers appeared in the ports of Georgia, and opened their market with the sanction of the British government. It was in vain that the governor and the council protested—it was a right of the crown, to designate what articles might be imported; the interest of British commerce, it was contended, required the protection of a branch of trade, in which so many ships were employed—the weal of the colonies was only a secondary consideration. The petitions of the colonists, the governor and the council, were refused. The first failure did not frighten them from a renewal of their prayers; they petitioned more urgently, eight or ten times successively, as the government acts of the colonies will show. The final answer to their indefatigable remonstrances was, that the governor was discharged, the council dissolved with a strong reproof, and the slave-trade continued even more vigorously than it had been before."

"But were the colonists compelled to buy these slaves?" inquired D'Ermonville.

"They could not throw them into the sea, like the tea-chests at Boston," rejoined Richards, "and, if you only know human nature in the least, you will be aware, that in every social community there are persons so eager after gain, that they have ever their profit, but not their duty, before their eyes. There were, naturally, persons who bought the blacks for profit; others, induced by humane feelings, bought them to save them from the heart-rending misery, to which they were exposed by the slavers and on the market-stalls.

"The bad success of Georgia, did not frighten the other colonies from the renewal of their petitions. They petitioned, and prayed; and the more fervently, as the evil became greater. In the northern colonies, they laid every obstacle in their power in the way of the importation and sale of slaves; but in the southern, where the constitution was less liberal, and gave to the governors appointed by the crown more power, the slaves were positively forced upon the colonists. The evil was so universally and deeply felt, that even this slave-trade became one of the leading causes which finally led to our revolution.

So you find in the original sketch of our Declaration of Independence—drawn by

Jefferson, Adams, Livingston, Sherman and Franklin, and composed by Jefferson—an article, which, among the many other grievances which forced the colonists to take up arms, and to cast off the British yoke, mentions also:

"That England has torn a strange people from their homes, transported them over wide seas, sold them in the North American colonies for slaves; and thus with strange people, a strange race, has opened a bloody market—yes, that she has not hesitated even to encourage these slaves, sold by her own sanction as such to the colonists, to a revolt against their masters and proprietors.*"

"This article," continued Richards, "has certainly been omitted in the publication of the Declaration of Independence, at the request of some delegates from the southern colonies, who in the debates had declared their doubts of its expediency; and as universal agreement in so important a document, naturally took precedence of all other considerations. But the disgust at this inconsiderate barbarism of the government, was expressed no less loud in the southern, than in the northern colonies."

"This, indeed, shows the affair in another point of view," remarks D'Ermonville, who listened attentively. "But I beg to be permitted one question: What has your Congress, your own government, done since the yoke of Great Britain was cast off, in the affairs of those unhappy negroes?"

"Your question is as modest as it is natural, and I shall answer it with pleasure.

"The colonies, even before the hostilities against Great Britain commenced, be-

* The following is a re-translation of this curious passage:

"He, (the king of Great Britain,) has carried on a cruel war against human nature itself, breaking the holiest rights of personal liberty and life in the persons of a strange people, which has never wronged him—dragging it into captivity and slavery in a strange country, and sacrificing it to shameful death during the voyage. This piratical war, a stain of shame upon heathen rulers, is a practice of war of the Christian king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market, for the purchase and sale of human beings, he has prostituted his veto, by which could have been suppressed and hindered the legislative acts, and this execrable trade. And that this mass of cruelties may not be lessened by any milder feature, he now incites these men to take up arms against us, and buy the liberty of which he deprived them, by murdering the people upon whom he had forced them; thus equalizing former crimes committed against the liberty of a people, with new ones, directed against the existence of another.

"On every occasion we have prayed in the most humble terms for relief; but our repeated prayer was only answered by fresh oppressions."

See Acts of Congress of 1776.

gan to take measures to stop this inhuman trade. The, so-called, Continental Congress of Philadelphia, assembled in the year 1774, passed the unanimous resolution, that from the beginning of December of the same year, no slave should be imported or exposed for sale. The same resolution had been previously passed by the colonial Assemblies of New-York and Delaware. That these resolutions did not have the deserved success, must alone be ascribed to the inevitable discord which followed ours, as well as every other Revolution.

"You have, perhaps, heard of the federal government, which was established, or rather established itself, after the close of the war of Independence. It was a simple union of the thirteen independent States—a union of States without internal connection, and without foreign allies; as every new State required, not only full sovereignty within its own limits, but, also, in regard to foreign connections. The federal government was so feeble, that it dissolved in itself after a few years of impotent existence. This took place in the year 1787, in which year the American nation became convinced of the necessity of a strong central government, and called a convention, to whom the great task of forming a new constitution was given. This convention assembled in the year 1787, and closed its labors in the year 1789; and in the same year the new constitution, with Washington as President, came into operation.

"It would have been desirable, if the fifty-two framers of this immortal monument of political wisdom, had also invested the central government with power to dispose of this slave question. But this was not done, and could not be done; because the several States, enjoying now the full use of their civil and political rights, considered the slave question a question of property. A majority of them were now really slave-holders, and only in the New England States, where slavery had never taken much root, had it been abolished during the interim of 1787 to 1789. A majority of the voices in Congress were in possession of the southern slave-holding States, who, gradually accustomed to the evil, were the more unwilling to abolish it, as they had invested the larger part of their property in the purchase of their slaves. And if you consider the difficulties which had to be overcome, before a strong and efficient general government could be formed—difficulties the greater, as every State was unwilling to sacrifice

more of its sovereign rights than was absolutely necessary; and that, thereby, the hands of the great framers of the constitution, Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Adams, Hamilton, Morris, were in a measure tied, then you will easily understand, how even these great and wise statesmen had to yield in this, as in many other points, lest they should injure the great life-principle of the rising States; for the question was, whether the delivered colonies should become thirteen small disunited republics, or one great, powerful Union. But even this convention did not wholly forget the slave question: nay, more was done in it, than in all the governments of Europe, of that time put together. A bill was passed, which subsequently became a law, to the effect that, although the possession of slaves, as it had been guaranteed to the slave-holding States by the crown of England, should for the future be secured to them, so that, also, the solution of this difficult question should remain with them; yet that the slave-trade should cease within the certain limit of seventeen years, and for ever; and that every American citizen, *found after that time engaged in the slave-trade, should be regarded and punished as a pirate.* This was done, while England and the other governments had scarce thought of the inhumanity of the slave-trade."

The whole company listened with the utmost attention to this conversation, so highly important and interesting to them.

"What now," he continued, "did the several States do, to whom the decision of this question was left? They did as follows: The New-England States had, in the meantime, abolished slavery within their limits. Shortly after, their example was followed by Pennsylvania, Delaware, New-York, New-Jersey—all together ten States. From these ten states, as is known, the western territories of Ohio, Illinois and Indiana, were settled, where no slavery exists. Michigan, which in a few years will become a State, holds no slaves, so that a majority of the United States abolished the slavery which had been forced upon them. There is no doubt that Maryland, Virginia and Kentucky, will follow the example.

"That is," concludes the speaker, "the way in which we try to abolish an evil—and an evil which has fallen upon us, and taken root, against our will. None of us deny it is an evil, and an evil which operates against us in more than one way; that it is a misfortune to our social life, and that a radical cure is absolutely necessary; but that this can only proceed gradu-

ally, and by degrees, no one, who has the least candor or understanding, will pretend to deny."

"Yes, yes; gradually," remarked D'Ermonvalle.

"You have already wasted more than twelve centuries in Europe, in endeavors to emancipate your white slaves, and the task is not accomplished; and these are the descendants of men, who have been deprived by their ancestors of their liberty, property and civil rights; to whom, consequently, they owe restitution. With us, the case is different—nay, the world does not present an analogous case. This case is really a monstrous one, at the contemplation of which your reason may be startled. To comprehend it only in a measure, you must recollect that Great Britain has, to its twenty-four millions of inhabitants and its hundred and twenty millions of foreign subjects, not over eight hundred thousand slaves in its West Indian dominions. France, to its thirty-two millions, not three hundred thousand on Martinique and other islands. Both governments might buy, or set free their slaves this day, without doing any serious injury to their subjects;—they live thousands of miles from them, and come into no collision with them. With us the case is different. We have nearly two and a half millions of slaves to a population of four millions, and if you count the whole Union, of fifteen millions. Just imagine one of the European governments, of seventeen millions of inhabitants, with such a mass of strange blood, forced upon them as slaves. Can you set them free at once, or put them on the same footing with yourselves, or grant them the equal rights of citizens?"

"And why not?" interrupted Vergennes.

A pitiful smile, which plays on every face, is the answer.

"You do not know this race, Monsieur Vergennes. Your opinions are derived from the French novels of Alexander Dumas, and Victor Hugo, and your club. Become acquainted with them in reality, and you will speak otherwise.

"Ah! Mr. Richards, that may be," interrupts Vergennes; "but you will admit, that the prejudice of your countrymen is unconquerable. Even your emancipation in the northern States!—do you call that emancipation, where the negro is only free in name, but can never step into equality with the whites, either civil or political? doomed to beg or serve—a blot which can never be effaced, even when he has ceased to be black, or colored, and has become white like you or me? If, in his pedigree,

you only show him one drop of negro blood, he is marked; he dares not sit down at table, in a theatre, or in a church, beside his white brother. Do you call this liberty?"

"Whoever told you so, has misinformed you," replied Richards, coolly. "Go into our churches, even during the administration of the Lord's supper, and you will see blacks and whites together; but, at the table and the theatre, I think it very natural that our neighbors should prefer their equals. If you call this prejudice, I can only say that we share it with all nations. I have never heard of any civilized people among whom illegitimate children have the same rights as lawful children, some solitary cases excepted."

But the ardent Vergennes did not hear.

"Do you call that liberty?—do you call that acting according to the principles professed in your Declaration of Independence, that 'all men are free and equal?'"

"Certainly," answered Richards, "we have asserted this principle, and I am firmly convinced that we have perfectly carried it through. We apply it even now to you, as to every foreigner, be he German, French, Irish, or English. All find themselves in our country treated like freemen; and if the free negroes are not quite as free as they, you may believe me, upon my word, it is their fault, not ours. But you," he added, "seem to be one of those strong spirits, who require of others superhuman sacrifices and renunciations—the sooner, as they do not cost anything to yourselves. If our fellow-citizens, as I remarked, have a prejudice against these colored people, be assured they have sufficient reasons for it—one of which I have told you."

"Reasons? no reasons!" exclaims Vergennes. "You yourself declare marriage with colored persons unlawful, and public opinion denounces it."

"But you certainly will not demand that an entire civil society should put the brand of shame on its brow, by sanctioning intermarriage with such a mass of intermixed bastards?" But these words were drowned by voices from every side.

"You certainly do not want our citizens to marry colored females!" cries Mrs. Houston.

"Why not?"

A fresh cry of horror burst from every mouth.

"The young man has horrible principles!" cries mamma.

"Shameless!" cries Mrs. Houston.

"Come, ladies, this language is too revolting—to throw ladies into the same

scale with these creatures ! indeed ! Pah ! horrible !”

“Terrible !” cried Louise and Julie.

“Horrible !” Menou and Genevieve.

The young man stands and looks around like a child, which has inconsiderately dug a hole into the dam of a rapid torrent—suddenly hearing the waters roar—more and more violently—he sees the dam itself falling a wreck, and carried away by the mighty flood. He turns to the right and to the left.

“But, good Heavens ! what wrong have I done ?” he finally asks.

“Monsieur Vergennes,” commences the Chevalier d’Ecars, “if you try to put the moral feelings of our ladies frequently to such a proof, I cannot but believe that the door will soon be closed against you everywhere.”

“That is really horrible !” cries Meurdon, who had not spoken a word yet.

“Abominable !” is heard from Miss Genevieve, at the door. She and the other ladies leave the room at once.

“Ah ! Vergennes,” says Doughby, “*vous auriez fait mieux de leinir votre langue comme vous êtes un peu en liqueur.*”

“Do you know who and what these negroes are ?” cries Lassalle.

“They are men !” cries Vergennes, who had not heard Doughby’s classic French.

“At least a fifth of it,” interrupts Meurdon.

“Do you know that you have deeply insulted our ladies, by putting them on an equality with colored people ?”

“Insulted ?” asks Vergennes, with an air of astonishment. “Do you call the defence of the rights of an oppressed race an insult ?”

“Oppressed ! oppressed !” replies Hauterouge. “We do not talk of oppression ; we speak of people, who, through a continued life of vice, and by unlawful intercourse, smuggled themselves among the white race ; and would you place these in the same rank with our wives and daughters ?”

“They are the offspring of beastly passion,” cries Lassalle. “As soon as you put them in the same rank with ladies, you overthrow the fundamental principle of matrimony.”

“Ungoverned passions lead to destruction, and are infectious by their very touch,” argues Hauterouge.

The tumult becomes still warmer.

“Messieurs ! messieurs !” cries Count Vignerolles with his clear, strong voice—“messieurs !” he repeats : “Hear what old Amadeé says.”

And strange ! the Babylonian confusion becomes quiet ; all turn to hear what Amadeé says. Vergennes attacked on every side, takes advantage of this moment, and brings himself up next to Amadeé, as a merchant-vessel, chased by a pirate, makes up to a frigate, seeking refuge behind her cannon.

“Pardon, gentlemen !” begins old Amadeé, taking a pinch with great gravity—“pardon ! if I, in my simplicity just observe, that this young gentleman says things, which were frequently said after our arrival in the Attakapas.”

“But, Amadeé, we did not say them so impertinently,” interrupted Hauterouge.

“Not before ladies,” said Lassalle.

“I wish these things had been said in just such an impertinent way—excuse me, Monsieur de Vergennes, I only repeat what my betters have said before ; perhaps it would have frightened off *somebody.*”

And the count, Hauterouge, Lassalle, and all the Frenchmen and Creoles, look significantly at the old man.

“*Ma foi !* Amadeé !”

“Monsieur Vergennes, also, wishes to defend the rights of the blacks and do them a service.”

Again a pause :

“For which, they would not thank him,” he continues. “Ah ! Monsieur Vergennes, believe me, these colored people are not born for matrimony, because they are not born *in* matrimony.”

We still look at the old man.

“Ah ! sir count,” he turns to Vergennes. “Does not something strike you in this young man ? look sharply at him.”

And the count looks at Vergennes for a moment.

“Monsieur Lacalle,” whispers Amadeé.

“Indeed, his very image,” involuntarily cries the count, casting another scrutinizing glance at the young man ; and then thoughtful, and almost dissatisfied, he passes his hand across his forehead.

Lassalle and Hauterouge cry, “*Ma foi !*” a dim cloud overspreads their features, and their looks fall compassionately on Vergennes.

“Poor Lacalle !” and “just as he looked,” is again heard.

Poor Vergennes stands abashed, his imperturbability is gone. It is certainly painful to see ourselves compassionately smiled at. But this lesson will do him good.

A long pause ensues.

“To tell you the truth,” finally commenced the count, “the debates we have

just heard were very disagreeable to me, with the exception of what Mr. Richards so truly and justly has observed—that slavery as it exists with us, is an evil and a blemish on our free constitution, we all know and feel deeply; but it is an affair which concerns us alone, and every stranger should take great care in meddling with it, because he certainly lacks the necessary knowledge of the case, and instead of shedding a light on this ticklish and important question, he only obscures it. Every civil society has the right, nay, it is their duty, to establish certain provisos for the adoption of particular classes among them. I believe that Europe, which excludes even now, millions of Israelites, more or less, from the enjoyment of the rights of citizens, and which has not half-finished the emancipation of its white serfs, has no right to reproach Americans for their tardiness in the same business. Our case, moreover, can scarcely be understood by any European who has not lived for some time in this country, because there is no analogous case in the trans-Atlantic world. For, as Mr. Richards very rightly remarked, this mass of slaves has been forced upon us, who not only bear no comparison in numbers with those possessed by France and England in the West Indian Islands, but are also in another way dangerous to our country; because they breed in the heart of it, spread their poison on every side, and undermine the morality of social life.

"The case with our blacks, is really a hard and an unhappy one; even harder than that of the white serfs in Europe. These, descending like their masters from the Caucasian race, can more easily be admitted into the same rank, as soon as they have reached the necessary degree of civilization—it is very questionable whether it will ever be good or practicable with our colored population. Theirs is another blood, a blood which in hot climates passes into boiling heat, and will boil up on every occasion. This the nation feels deeply, and hence our refusal to take this exotic race among us. About matrimonial ties, or the so-called amalgamation, I must say frankly, that were the disgust against it less, I could not possibly respect the people of the United States so highly as I think we have good reason to do at present."

"Spoken like a true American!" we cried, shaking the count's hands. But while we are doing so, a deep sigh escapes the old man's breast, and a sorrowful cloud overspreads his brow. It is evident that

he had only spoken to withdraw our attention from Lacalle.

"But pardon! what was that about Lacalle?" inquired Monsieur de Meurdon. "Is it the same Lacalle, who——"

"Amadée," said the count, turning, "you have done a foolish thing; such gloomy memories are best buried in oblivion."

"Ah! sir count," replied the old servant, "what avails it to hurry them into oblivion, when they always appear under a new form? Ah! if Monsieur Lacalle had known how it would end—and Monsieur Caillou, who, two years after—ah! it would certainly not hurt the young man. He shall stay in Louisiana."

"And," he added, while the count remained silent, "we could go into the dining saloon."

"But Demoiselle Lacalle," said Hauterogue.

"How; is Demoiselle Lacalle here?" I asked.

"Yes, with my daughter," replied the count, who had at once become very quiet.

"And her father?"

No answer.

"So our young friend shall, for the present, stay in Louisiana?"

Vergennes nodded mechanically. Again a long pause. We looked astonished at each other.

"Yes, we will go into the dining saloon, if it pleases the gentlemen."

And with these words the count leaves his seat. We retire in silent anxiety to the saloon, for something of the rumor about Lacalle, had also reached our ears, but in a disfigured, dark, and gloomy form. We consequently were all anxious to hear the strange, half-forgotten tradition, from an authentic source.

CHAPTER V.

THE ENTRANCE INTO THE ATTAKAPAS.

"You, Messieurs, are acquainted with the place where the drama, which I am about to sketch, took place," commenced the count, turning to us and the Creoles; "our two young friends here, must be introduced to it by a short description."

"Twenty-nine, and thirty-nine miles above the capital, two branches break from the Mississippi on the western side, called bayou la Fourche, and bayou Plaquemine—the customary route which formerly, and also now, in high-water time, is taken to the Attakapas. In the months of

February, March, and April; when the Mississippi swells above its usual height, the water falls, with extraordinary power, over the masses of wood and bog which are gathered there; and which almost dam off the mouths of the two bayous. With this flood, commences also the navigation on these two branches, which lasts until the streams and lakes, belonging to the western waters of the Mississippi, rise to the same height with the latter; with the falling of the water in the stream, closes the navigation. The farther you advance into these natural canals, the more you perceive the current has decreased in force; and the traveller may congratulate himself that he has escaped the first danger, if his vessel has not been wrecked on a bend in the river, or on a snag; but prepare, nevertheless, to meet other and perhaps greater dangers. These bayous are crossed by so many rivers, standing-waters and swamps, that, even with an exact knowledge of them, it is only with the greatest care that a course through this labyrinth can be found. Now they expand to a lake, into which a great mass of new waters empty themselves; again, they are so narrow, that you cannot distinguish them from the twenty-foot-high overflowed cypress forests. The weight of these immense trees, is festooned above our heads. The Spanish moss hangs in long close wreaths from their gigantic arms, lies upon the water, and obstructs the way. No ray of the sun penetrates this night of water and of forest; a gloomy darkness oppresses the scene, and all nature. No singing bird utters its merry notes. In day time, the roar of thousands of alligators and bull-frogs—after sundown, the horrible laughter and groans of the great Mississippi owl, drive the traveller to despair. He imagines himself sailing on the waters of the Styx or Acheron; feels agitated, oppressed, and frightened in these gloomy, ominous regions.

"After a voyage of about twenty-four hours, he for the first time emerges from this labyrinth. The day smiles again upon him, and suddenly becomes a sea of light. A most beautiful panorama opens to his sight. An enchantingly beautiful lake, embracing several miles, meets his astonished look. The banks are again lined with colossal cypresses, their trunks covered with Spanish moss, their dark-green colors wreathing in each other, and appearing, at the first view, like so many domes built together. You stand gazing, confused. At last, aware of the optical illusion, the glance turns from these ma-

jestic natural domes, and rests on the most charming flower-garden which heavenly power ever showed to human eyes. He sees millions of nelumbas, those queens among the water-flowers, in their greatest beauty. They lift their conic, urn-shaped leaves proudly over the waters, and overlook them to the middle of the lake. Millions of the most beautiful tulips blend in gorgeous hues; water-fowl, with many-colored plumage, and in uncounted masses, glide past incessantly. In the centre alone glitters a stripe of bright, crystal water. He unwillingly leaves this enchanting lake, to lose himself once more in the mass of rivers and bayous; whence he comes into the larger of these island lakes, thence into the mighty river Atchafalaya—also a natural outlet of the overflowing Mississippi, and at length into the Teche. At last, when almost despairing, he arrives in the Attakapas. The land which rises from the Gulf of Mexico, from trembling reed and rush to swampy meadows, becomes at last harder soil as it stretches farther north, and, watered by the Teche, Vermilion, and many other rivers and lakes, has received the name of the paradise of Louisiana.

"To the right, the Teche winds itself through endless valleys and meadows, like an iron-gray silk ribbon. Thousands and thousands of cattle and horses run half wild around you; innumerable groups of trees, evergreen oaks, papaws, and magnolias, shade the panorama; plantations, bedded in forests of tropical fruit-trees, appear to the right and left; smaller lakes enliven the scene; a soft, voluptuous, moistening glow seems breathed over the whole;—the paradise of the ancients, as the poet's fancy saw it, stands here in reality before your eyes."

The count stopped, and after a short pause, continued in a more lively tone:

"As I describe this enchanting scene, the period seems again before me, when we, twenty-nine years ago, glided for the first time past these lovely valleys. At every plantation we passed, we were complimented, and pressingly invited to stay. I see and hear still how Lassalle, spreading his arms in delight and joy toward the shore, exclaims: 'We shall live a heavenly life!' and in an ecstasy of joy cries out: 'An elysian! patriarchal life!' How the honest, gray-haired Roche Martin, who stood at the rudder in the tentelek, his fatherly glance directed to Lassalle, murmured: 'An elysium! I don't know what that means, but here they call it paradise; and paradise it must be, for it has serpents. Be

careful, boy, of these serpents, which are colored: they smell bad!"

"Roche Martin!" said the count, interrupting himself, "was the same rough, but honest Acadien, who had saved us four days previous from the log in the Placque-mine, and taken us aboard his vessel. He therefore addressed us, 'thou and thee,' after the fashion of the Acadiens; which pleased us the more, as the old man had gained much experience in a long course of life. During our four days journey, we had naturally asked many questions of him, about public and social connections in the Attakapas. Our conversation turned upon the colored population, of whom he never spoke, without first applying the protective ceremony of the *salva venia*, as our cockneys are wont to do when speaking of an evil spirit. This gave rise to repeated debates, in which Lassalle, generally, for the sake of argument, and with some hardihood, took the side of these colored people. The old man shook his gray head, and murmured: 'Boy, boy, be careful; these colored people will cause thee great misfortunes!'

"The scene became still more beautiful as we were travelling up the Teche. An indescribable, soft, and quiet life seemed to prevail everywhere. Now and then we saw naked black figures, passing lazily through the bushes; but no sound was heard save the grumbling old man, who, with the accustomed obstinacy of the Acadiens, and with lifted forefinger, continued to grumble, 'He does not understand yet; they smell so bad—these colored people: they will be his destruction.'

"We had entered a bend of the river, from which rose one of the most beautiful plantations we had ever seen; it seemed to sleep in the soft, fragrant flower-beds of the orange, lilac, lemon, and fig-trees. Farther off, stood groups of live-oaks and magnolias, forming a roof over the house, which, in the reflection of the sunbeams appeared floating. The groups of trees were cut from the forest after a certain plan—the lower trees were trimmed. The plantation evidently belonged to a Frenchman. This was soon confirmed by Roche Martin, who murmured angrily: 'Here lives an old noble; he will not suffer himself to be called *thou*, this M. de Morbihan.'

"De Morbihan. I looked into my letters. One of the addresses was to a Monsieur de Morbihan. But it was not him with whom we had intended to stop.

"At that moment a man stepped from the fragrant orange grove, dressed in a

worn cotton jacket and pantaloons, through which the bare knees were seen; with a broad-brimmed straw hat on his head, and a foot covering, for which, at that time, we had no name, but afterward became very fond of wearing under the name of moccasins. It was Monsieur de Morbihan himself. He walked quickly and inquisitively toward the shore, and cried to Roche Martin, from afar: '*Eh bien!* what news have you?' 'Frenchmen!' answered Roche Martin, 'but not for thee—for one who can be called *thou*.'

"The old man jumped up. 'What do you say—you bring Frenchmen, and not to me—but to one who can be called *thou*?' And again he jumped up. 'What do you say to me, you coarse Acadien fellow? Is it to me, the Monsieur of Morbihan, you speak thus?' And while he spoke, Monsieur de Morbihan shook his fist at Roche Martin. 'Messieurs,' he turned to us, taking off his hat, 'pardon—the old ruffian has no manners: he calls cavaliers *thou*, like an unmannered corporal of the *marechaussé*. D'y'e say you bring Frenchmen, fellow? just as if you had a load of negroes or blankets? Ah! if I was commandant, I'd teach you to say *thou*.' and the good Monsieur de Morbihan threw up his old straw hat so curiously, we thought the good man had suddenly become frantic by a sun-stroke.

"Adelaide! Adelaide!' he suddenly cried, turning to the orange-arbor—'Adelaide! Frenchmen, my dear child, have been brought here by that Acadien ruffian, who calls me *thou*; who has not two negroes, and has to plant his corn with his own rough and dirty hands—ha! ha! ha! is n't it funny?' and shaking his left fist at the Acadien ruffian, as he called good Roche Martin: he winked with his right eye, and threw kisses back to the arbor whence he had come.

"We heard—we looked—we did not believe our own eyes. Suddenly he rushed forward, and called out to us: 'Frenchmen! Frenchmen! countrymen! Just arrived? Whence? whence? whence?' 'From the Bretagne, the Touraine, the Provence,' we answered.

"The strange old fellow jumped high with joy. 'Adelaide!' he cried, toward the orange-arbor, 'Frenchmen from Provence, Touraine, Bretagne, who bring us news.'

"Now something white appeared in the arbor, and at the edge of it was seen the longed-for Adelaide, a slender built figure of magnificent proportions. As she advanced in the relief of the orange-arbor, we thought we beheld a floating sylph. She

was dressed in a snowy battese morning-dress, which helped to display the luxuriant outline of the swelling limbs; a broad straw hat covered the beautiful head, from which a profusion of brilliant black ringlets fell upon the snow-white, swan neck: in one hand she held a parasol, in the other, a fan of colored paroquet feathers; and a girl, of about twelve years, followed her with a musquito fan. She threw a short passing glance at the vessel, which was only about a hundred feet from the landing, and then moved in graceful nonchalance toward the planter; who, impatient to the highest degree, had jumped forward and backward, as if struggling with himself, not knowing what party to join—finally he came to her in a few jumps, took her gently by the arm, and drew her, partly by force, to the bench, where he stopped, throwing a triumphant glance at the girl, and then at us.

"The whole appearance of the man has more of theatrical coquetry, than of paternal tenderness. His looks seemed to ask: 'Well, did you not come now to see Monsieur de Morbihan?' Our eyes hung upon the strange couple, and especially on the fair Adelaide. With a certain slowness of motion she had floated toward us, like the vessel upon which we had sailed before a light breeze, floating and rocking gracefully in the soft berth of the waves, each movement made enchanting by the trembling play of every limb. The whole being of this girl had to us something so new—something so extraordinary. Her color was snow-white, almost transparent, like fine-cut alabaster—the curls, brilliantly black, fell over the half-concealed neck; but the eyes, those eyes! We had never seen such eyes. They were oval, more almond-like than round—not completely black, but gazelle-black, dreamingly half-closed and floating in a liquid brightness. Sometimes there was an unutterable degree of languor and love in these brilliant eyes. 'Dame-like,' we all uttered involuntarily.

The count stopped, and then continued: "We had taken off our hats. 'Hurry, and get done, old villain!' cried Monsieur de Morbihan to Roche Martin, stamping impatiently; and as the other, still disregarding his demand, did not put out the gangway boards, the old man threw an imploring look at his daughter, with the words: 'You see, Adelaide, if I do not go, it will take an hour before they land.' He jumped into the vessel—he fell literally into my arms.

"Come out, out," he cried, embracing

me—"out of this barbarian peasant's vessel. Welcome countrymen—out, I say out!" Adelaide!" he cried to her on shore—"Adelaide, do you see Frenchmen? these are real Frenchmen! You can see it in their eyes; other stuff than those we have over on the Chetmachas;" and again he embraced me.

"Suddenly he jumped back. 'But you are a nobleman, monsieur? or a cavalier? I am the Sieur de Morbihan.' 'I beg a thousand pardons,' I replied; 'I call myself Louis Victor de Vignerolles.' 'Louis Victor de Vignerolles! I know a certain Hugh, Count de Vignerolles.' 'I am his son.

"He would not let me finish. '*Ma foi,*' he cried, striking his forehead, 'where were my eyes? Ah, sir count de Vignerolles, pardon; one becomes blind in the Attakapas—among these peasants and laborers, one becomes almost a peasant. A thousand pardons, I beg, but we are not altogether peasants yet.' And saying this he stepped back a pace, put on his patched, torn hat, took it off again, made a bow, and embraced me in the manner of the courtiers of the times of '60 and '70; then taking me by the hand, he turned with a bow to Adelaide, who stood on shore: 'Mademoiselle Adelaide de Morbihan, I have the honor of introducing to you, Monsieur le Comte Louis Victor de Vignerolles. Monsieur le Comte, I have the honor of introducing to you, Demoiselle Adelaide de Morbihan, my daughter.'

"Demoiselle Adelaide made her courtesy on shore—I bowed from the vessel—Monsieur de Morbihan turned to the next. It was Hauterouge. 'Monsieur,' he spoke to him, 'I am the Sieur de Morbihan.' Hauterouge replied: 'Monsieur de Morbihan! My name is Vincent de Hauterouge.'

"Monsieur de Morbihan embraced Hauterouge, took him by the hand, and turning to Adelaide, he said again: 'Mademoiselle de Morbihan, I have the honor of introducing to you, Monsieur le Baron Vincent de Hauterouge—Monsieur le Baron, I have the honor of introducing to you, Demoiselle Adelaide de Morbihan.'

"The daughter repeated her courtesy, and the baron made his bow. Monsieur de Morbihan stepped to Lassalle. The same etiquette. When the turn came to Lacalle, the old man seemed puzzled. He threw an inquiring, almost frightened look at his daughter. She had blushed all over, her half-closed eyes were bent to the ground. 'The father stood for a moment, looking distrustfully at Lacalle.

"I took the word: 'Monsieur de La-

calle, captain in the regiment of Monsieur, my dear friend.'

"The old man approached the youth slowly, and evidently struggling with himself. During this episode, the bosom of the daughter rose higher; a fixed glance rested on her father, and he, like one who has to redress a wrong, pressed the confused blushing youth quickly into his arms.

"If the strange ceremony of introduction had already excited our attention, you can easily imagine that it rose to a higher pitch at this last performance.

"The gangboard had meanwhile been thrown ashore, and arriving on the banks, we complimented father and daughter once more: whereupon they led us to the house.

"This was arranged far more comfortably than at our first entrance we could have imagined, although the naked children, girls and boys, and the almost equally naked wenches, who were lying about the saloon, had nearly driven us out again. We had hardly entered the piazza in company with the strange Monsieur de Morbihan, when they departed with a yell and a howl; leaving us, not a little astonished, to ourselves. Not only did the whole house become excited, but the revolution which our appearance occasioned, communicated itself to the whole settlement. Scarce had two hours passed, when—we were just at dinner—a sound of voices, anything but agreeable, was heard from the piazza. From all sides, the inhabitants of the settlement arrived, in boats and on horseback, with as much speed as if they were engaged in a race, and in the strangest dresses. One wore a Siamese jacket, and pantaloons of the same, with a gold-bordered, three-cornered hat, *à la Frédéric*; another came in a gingham frock, *à l'incroyable*; a third in a velvet coat, with faded gold lacing, *à la Louis Quinze*, and unbleached calico trowsers; a fourth in a taffeta coat. The costumes of all the decennaries of the eighteenth century were to be seen. They arrived, debating and gesticulating; the noise became continually louder, the nearer they came to the house—arrived there, it became a general dispute, so that every moment we thought they would fight.

"One cried: 'They must come to me; the whole ten have room there.' 'Badand!' cried another, with bitter scorn, 'what will they do with you, who have nothing but gumbo? Will you feed them like your hogs?' 'And you have nothing but pet-tigno,' cried a third to the second—'they must come to me!' 'What do you want?' said a fourth to the last speaker—'you,

who have nothing to call your own—save half-a-dozen of negroes, and twice as many arpens, planted with corn. Shall the gentlemen become acquainted with the Attakapas by your Sagamite?' 'Ah!' laughed a fifth, 'he too, wants to pass for a nobleman; and every child in the settlement knows that his father was a Catalanian!'

"We looked in amazement at each other; the scene was funny, but at the same time had a strong flavor of meanness. Suddenly, Monsieur de Morbihan ran from the house, and stopping on the stairs, he cried: 'Messieurs, is this the manner in which to pay your respects to French cavaliers? *Morbleu! parbleu!* what must these gentlemen think of you? I tell you, we have a ball; and go now, in Heaven's name, to inform your families, and then we'll see further!'

"The word ball, put an end to all dispute. A merry bravo was heard from every mouth. Laughingly, they shook hands with Monsieur de Morbihan; laughingly, they stepped into the piazza, embraced, and told us the cause of their dispute. It had been about us, and the good people had almost fought for the honor of having us first in their house. We joined the laughter, although it strongly reminded us of the ways and means in which our wreckers generally prove their rights and claims to the remains of a stranded ship. After they had examined us from every side, and we them, and their dresses—legacies from their fathers and grandfathers, of which they were the prouder the more they were worn—they strongly insisted upon our telling them the news. Some had left, to bring to the families the news of the ball; the rest, however, had stayed to hear something of *la belle France!*

"And so we told them of *la belle France*, and sat, describing to the listening Attakapas, the appalling fate which had fallen with iron hand on our beloved land; of the murder of the best king that ever adorned a throne; of the troubles of the Convention, the Monte and Gironde parties; of the Marats, Robespierres, St. Juste; and the dictatorship of the daring Corsican, who at that time astonished all Europe by his wondrous energy. Of all this, the good Attakapas knew nothing. They were as innocent of the great revolution of the world, as new-born children; and their astonishment, although they did not understand half of what we told them, was unbounded.

"During our relation, the avenue leading to the plantations began to look lively again. We saw ladies on horseback, and in cabriolets, at the wildest gallop, coming

up to the house, slipping merrily out of the saddles and carriages, and dancing up the piazza.

"We were very agreeably surprised. The gentlemen generally were dressed in the above-mentioned, old-fashioned costumes; the ladies were attired after the latest fashion, in crape, gause, gros de Naples, or embroidered mouselines, with garlands in their hair, and many of them with rich jewelry. A circle of luxuriously built beauties was assembled, whose noble forms contrasted strongly with the common appearance of the men. They presented extremes in costumes, as well as in all other relations.

"We were introduced into the ball-room by two masters of ceremonies. It was illuminated with tallow candles; the walls looked poor, and the two negroes, who formed the orchestra, were really grotesque figures. To us these things had the charm of novelty, which was heightened, by the elegant costumes of the ladies, their beauty and liveliness. At this moment, it appeared to us as if we were back in our dear France, engaged on one of those charming country parties, which owe their particular freshness to their rusticity. We had also, for a long time, not seen so many beauties collected in so small a space. We waited with impatience for the opening of the ball; and I must declare, that my surprise came to the highest pitch when we danced the first cotillon. This loveliness of motion, this ease, this poetry of dance, we had not dreamed of. I consider the Creoles the best dancers in the world; they blend the graceful ease of the French, with the majesty of the Spaniards. It is only in the dance that their enchanting power becomes irresistible.

"The crown, however, was still due to Adelaide. She was, beyond dispute, the most beautiful, as well as the proudest, among those really sublime figures, who made that night for ever memorable to us.

"If," the count interrupted, "after ten years of struggle, storms, encampments and persecution, you are thrust at once, and unexpectedly, into such a merry company, it has a deepening and intoxicating effect on you. We at least felt confounded at this sudden change—the recollections of our youth; the reminiscences of our family circle; the latter days of our life at court, and the brilliant night-pictures at Versailles, reappeared before us, like pleasant dreams.

"It was a delightful moment when we entered the Attakapas, into the house of

Monsieur Morbihan—one of those bright moments which, by their serene freshness, brighten the dark shades of a dreary life. We shall never forget that night. We drank in full, long draughts from the long-untasted cup of joy. None more than Lacalle—he was doubly happy.

"To me, the sweet embarrassment of the unspoiled youth, in the first moments of his love—so tender, so confused, and so mild, has an unspeakable charm. It is like the dew on the broken flower. With his mild confusion, Lacalle united that sure and decided manner, which the warlike spirit of our nation impresses upon our youth. Although of comparatively low family, (his grandfather was a merchant in Nantes, and his father was ennobled as a commissary of finance,) he had acquired the manners of the old nobility. At the outbreak of the revolution he had escaped with his family to England, became there passionately enamored of the daughter of a historically great house, and by her advice had been induced to lend his arm to the cause of the banished royal family. So we had become acquainted, fought together, related to each other the stories of our love, and returned in company to England, after the close of the second Vendée war. He was just in time to take an eternal adieu of his adored Harriet. The loss of his first love had made England insupportable to him; to France he could not return, so he joined us. A considerable fortune, of which he had the disposal, and a larger, which he had in expectation, secured him at all events a quiet, if not a brilliant future; and contributed to give him that comfortable self-confidence in his new position, which seemed nowhere more necessary than here. Otherwise gay and free, and a sincere friend, and passionately loving all that was good and beautiful, and harmless as a child, he was the favorite of all who knew him. Being the youngest of us—he was but twenty-four—he was among us what the minor is in Spanish families.

"The first meeting with Adelaide had made him tremble and blush. She was the first female who came before him, after a disagreeable voyage of three months. She was beautiful, very beautiful—her features, besides, bore some likeness to those of his lamented love. During the ball the pair always met, spite the pains of the master of the ceremonies to part them. They seemed created for each other—he an image of youthful beauty, she a Danæ, just opening the bud. All eyes hung with delight on the pair—Monsieur

de Morbihan alone, seemed to wrinkle his forehead.

"Monsieur de Morbihan was descended of an old, but impoverished family, which, during the times of Henry the Third, had large possessions in the Tourraine, but subsequently lost them during the Fronde Wars. In his youth, Louis de Morbihan had been a page in the house of the Rohans—had been employed by the Prince de Rohans, in one of the many intrigues which this ambitious, feeble person carried on in favor of the Piedmontese princess, and against the ill-fated daughter of Maria Theresa. Had fallen into disgrace at court through this, and in despair gone to Louisiana. Here, he had succeeded in gaining the post of commander on the Red River, and soon after the hand of a rich heiress in the Attakapas, where he finally settled. Their marriage had not been happy. A few years before our arrival, the wife had died of yellow fever; and of the five children which she had by him, only Adelaide was alive—the heiress of all the property of her mother. The dependence upon his daughter into which this disposal of the inheritance placed the father, we had remarked during the first moments of our stay; it had stamped the man with a certain unsteadiness, which sometimes had the appearance of coarse command, and again of submissiveness, sometimes even bordering upon meanness. Still, in his manner some touches of that finesse were seen, which is so peculiar to the southern Frenchman; but the energy which sometimes serves as a noble relief to it, had disappeared, and given place to a peasant-like hypochondriacism, of which we had a satisfactory proof on our arrival. His exterior was a true mirror of his mind: his features were disagreeable; a certain sourness had come over them, which corresponded perfectly with his figure—it was but rarely that any French hilarity and bonhomie appeared. There must, evidently, have been many causes which converted a man created for better things, into such a strange phenomenon.

"Long after midnight the company parted, and we went to our rooms to repose. The sun was already shedding his bright rays through the amber-trees which lined the east side of the plantation, when I was awakened by a hot itching on my arms and face.

"Amadée stood before me. He had drawn back the mosquito-nets, and at the same moment some of the insects had fallen upon me, to try my fresh, outlandish blood.

"Amadée, what do you want? I cried,

a little angry. Amadée put his fore-finger to his mouth, and pointed at the half-open blinds. 'Amadée, I want to sleep longer.' Amadée put his finger again to his lips, and offered me my dressing-gown.

"I got up, in compliance with his wish. The room in which I slept was a corner room opening on the balcony, through the blinds of which I saw a thicket of orange, palm and catalpa-trees, forming a thick arbor. The morning was wonderfully refreshing. Through the golden and snow-white fruits glittered the mirror of the Teche—birds of song hopped through the branches, and among them, two mocking-birds. The male sat on a catalpa branch, and chirped with his hen, who rocked upon the branches a few feet lower down—flew around her, up to her, again around her, and then both broke out in the most beautiful nightingale song. I stood charmed. The lovely birds rose higher, and imitated from their little throats the mewing of cats, the barking of dogs, the bleating of sheep, and of all animals which greeted the rising day in and around the house. The hen sent forth a curious laughing tone, and the male, flying up, broke again into the charming strain of our European nightingales. It was the first American mocking-bird I had ever heard: I felt strangely touched.

"Amadée interrupted me, by pointing through the half-open blinds into the arbor. It was covered with numerous convolvulus, orange and lemon-flowers. Festoons of wild grapes were intermingled with the trees and bushes, and fell into the arbor, entwining in a most beautiful rustic fashion a sofa, made of green branches, before which stood the large stump of an amber-tree as a table. I looked sharper—from the sofa something bright and white met my eyes. It was Adelaide, who, overhung by convolvulus flowers, sat on the sofa, her black, brilliant hair falling in ringlets upon her snowy neck; her swimming eyes were fixed upon the cooing mocking-bird; then again, dreamingly bent upon the ground. Now she passed her hand across her forehead, and a low sigh rose from her beating, oppressed bosom, betraying strong emotions, and that the arrow of the little god had pierced deeply.

"I stood gazing at the lovely creature. Amadée put his fore-finger again to his lips, and pointed at a second figure, which stood at the entrance. It was Monsieur de Morbihan; who, with wrinkled brow, looked at the dreaming Adelaide. Sometimes his features changed into a grin—then they lighted up again. Something like malicious bitterness seemed to possess

him. Strangely confused ideas must have agitated this man's breast: the muscles of his face betrayed such peculiar emotions. Sometimes he raised his foot, as if to approach his daughter, then he stopped again as if he had not the courage. Finally, he roused himself, and made one step forward. The eyes of the maiden were still half closed. He made a second step. Now her glance fell upon him, but it was not the filial glance of a loving daughter, who bids good morrow to her father—it was the glance of a stern mistress, who looks angry at being interrupted in her most pleasant dreams by her attendant. She looked at him for a moment, and then her eye fell again upon the ground.

"The father was still silent, but the muscles of his face spoke instead of his tongue. Again he stepped nearer. She raised her little head, and inquired briefly, in the tone of a commanding mistress: 'What do you want?' 'Dear Adelaide! I have not seen you to-day yet.'

"A strange, half bitter, half scornful smile played around the lips of the beautiful child. The old man looked at her, and a new grin overspread his face. 'Adelaide! what puts you into this ill-humor?' demanded Monsieur de Morbihan, in an inquisitive tone.

"Adelaide stared at the ground, and crushed with her foot the convolvulus flowers that grew around the sofa. The contrast between the girl in her brilliant movements, in her gentleness, increased by the first sensation of love; and the same girl, to-day, was indeed striking. She was altogether a different being.

"'Adelaide!' said the father again. 'What?' she inquired, peevishly. 'You are angry.' 'Ah! papa! and who would not be angry? Your Juba tore my new silk dress, when she came out of your bedroom; and when I scolded her, she laughed in my face. Papa, you must not spoil my slaves.'

"These words were not spoken in a loud tone, but drawled angrily: they sounded discordant in my ear. I looked at the beautiful speaker, doubting whether it was she who had spoken. The papa stood there like a condemned criminal.

"'For a week past, you have taken her for your *chère amie*; you sleep with her,' she continued, in the same drawling, almost disgusting tone. 'I will not suffer that in my house.'

"The man grinned again, and both appeared to me the most revolting objects. The girl spoke of her father's disgrace, as if somebody had stepped on her musquito fan.

"'Ah! Adelaide,' said the father, after a pause, with an insinuating voice and disagreeable smile: 'is that what disturbs your temper so much?' 'And what else?' 'Ah! you have secrets, of which I hear nothing from you.' She looked for a moment inquiringly at him. 'And if I have them?' 'Ah! Adelaide, you look at me. Your look says: Must you know all?'

"Adelaide looked more sharply at her father; for one moment she searched his features, and then her glance bent to the ground again. 'Adelaide, you cannot conceal it,' the father again began. 'What?' she asked. 'That—that, Monsieur de —!' Adelaide! my child! be sincere; remember that I am your father. I cannot, it is true, command you: for your mother left that right to her child, which she refused to her husband.'

"The girl rose, raising her glance to heaven: two bright tears started to her eyes. How beautiful—how angelic were those maiden tears! 'Alas! my mother!' she cried; and then, as if overwhelmed with her emotions, she sunk down—her head reclining on her breast. 'Your mother,' rejoined the man, 'had acted more fitly, more wisely, had she left the child under the control of the father.'

"The features of the girl changed suddenly—indignation, disgust, and contempt, flashed o'er her burning brow, but she remained silent. 'The control of the father, who,' he continued, in a lower tone, 'would not have abused it.' 'Papa!' cried the girl, 'do not force from me what I should regret having said:—not have abused!' You! whom every one of my slaves—but no more of this. Be silent, I implore you!' She paused. 'Good Heavens! I can scarcely, with honor, live in my own house!' 'Bah! bah!' reiterated the father, angrily. 'You fly from the subject about which I would consult—advise you.'

"Her lovely eyes were cast upon the ground. 'Be not rash, my daughter, pause, deliberate—remember that you are young—but sixteen. Peace will soon smile on France; we will go thither, and——' 'I will not go to France.' 'Could you but see the world, and learn to know it, Adelaide! The large fortune——' 'Which you would——' interrupted Adelaide. She did not finish the sentence, but her look said plainly—'Which you would get in your own hands.'

"The old man, caught in his own snare, grinned painfully. 'Confess, Adelaide,' he continued in a lurking tone, and watching her closely—'confess; has not Mon-

sieur de Lacalle made an impression on you?"

"The girl, who had been quite pale, now turned crimson. 'Adelaide! it is then as I feared; you love the captain!' 'Love him!' echoed the glowing girl, in a scarcely audible voice, as she passed a convoluted to her lips, as if to hide or repress her violent emotion; then, as if in desperation, she jumped up and took the old man's hand—'Yes!' she cried, 'I love him! I love him! Oh! papa! I must have him! I must marry him! Ask, demand what you will—but do not! oh! do not deny me!'"

"His face fell into multitudes of inconceivable wrinkles—I had never seen a grimace so horrible; the man looked like a monkey. The spasmodic expression moderated by degrees—but I was pleased to observe, even in this indication, that paternal feeling had not quite deserted his breast. 'Adelaide?' said he, at last, 'I would rather you had fallen in love with the lowest Acadien.'

"The girl shrank from him as from a congo-snake. 'Adelaide,' he continued, and a sorrowful smile spread over his distorted visage—'Adelaide! believe me! I would rather you had loved the lowest Acadien!'"

She looked at him indignantly. 'Ah! Adelaide—if you knew the story of the first years of my marriage with your blessed mother!' 'Whom you made unhappy!' responded the maiden, in a scarcely audible tone. 'We both made ourselves unhappy. Believe me, Adelaide! a Creole and a Frenchman are unfit for each other.'

"She shook her head. 'You Creoles are accustomed to reign, and exact passive obedience from all around you.'

"These words made me stare at father and daughter. A ray of light fell before me. 'We Frenchmen cannot bear this slavery, and you have not tenderness enough to make the chains tolerable.' 'Oh! papa! why did my beloved mother become unhappy? Was it not because you, with all slaves, even with those ugly negroes—' 'They understood, at least, how to love, and your mother did not!' said the unnatural father. 'My mother!' cried the daughter, passionately, 'was the most faithful of wives; her life was an example!' 'It was!' replied the father, 'but she did not understand how to love. She—'

"He stopped, struggling with himself, in his embarrassment, to arrange his words so as to convey their meaning. 'Understand me, Adelaide,' he finally continued. 'Monsieur de Lacalle is a nobleman, a fine young man; he seems to be full of

feeling. He has seen you at the ball, where you were excited.' 'And?' inquired the girl. 'Adelaide, will you always retain that excitement? Those gentle, yet warm feelings—that passion—without which, the Frenchman cannot exist?'"

"The girl looked at him—she did not understand. But I began to understand both father and daughter. 'Oh! Adelaide! you are young, inexperienced, accustomed to the monotonous life of your plantation, accustomed to see your every wish fulfilled—will Monsieur de Lacalle have a taste for this life?' 'Why not? He loves me; his looks tell me so!' 'Will he do so a year hence?' 'He will!'"

"The old man shook his head. So I thought too. 'Ah! dear Adelaide, pardon. You are a Creole, who has never learned to be led by another's will, who know nothing of that tender, caressing—' 'Fie, papa!' said the daughter. 'Adelaide, you do not understand me.' 'I will not understand you—must not understand!' said the girl, with averted face. 'Adelaide!' conjured the father, 'I pray you, wait at least—' 'But I will not—shall not wait!' she suddenly cried, in a wonderful passion. 'I shall not—do you hear? He shall, he must be mine—he shall, he must be mine!' she repeated, stamping her foot upon the ground. 'Be only patient, dear child,' begged the father, approaching and taking her hand.

"She tore herself away: 'He must be mine! In eight days be mine—in one week mine!—do you hear, papa?' she cried, in a commanding voice; and she stood before her father, and with an insolent look stared at him. 'And your father—your father! what is to become of him, if you get married?'"

"These words were spoken in so peculiar a tone of voice—they sounded so humble, so pitiful—that they pierced me to the soul. 'What shall become of you when I marry?' She stopped, and looked at her father from head to foot. 'Then—yes, then then we shall not need Tailou, our overseer, and shall save by that alone six hundred dollars. You and Lacalle divide the business between you, and I will give you, in addition, two hundred dollars more.'

"Shocked as I was at this, I could not help laughing at the thought of Lacalle, with whip in hand, following the negroes—he, the enthusiastic youth, who would have given the last drop of his blood for the "rights and dignity of man."

"To the father, this proposition did not appear by any means laughable. The word "addition" evidently conquered all

his objections. He certainly expressed some doubts, whether Lacalle would be satisfied to take upon himself the position of slave-overseer; but the daughter's firm "*I will*," silenced him, and he promised to be altogether at her service! They both left the arbor—he rubbing his hands with a disagreeable sneer on his lips. At that moment he appeared to me a common *go-between*, as such persons are called in their language. I stood amazed: such a scene I had never before witnessed. The fragments of the family picture, which had been laid before my eyes, were all besmeared with such a filthy immorality—such disgusting selfishness—that I repeatedly looked through the blinds, doubting whether I was really in the paradise of Louisiana, or, perhaps, in one of the celebrated side-alleys of the rue St. Honoré or Richelieu of our vicious Paris. The daughter appeared to me, if possible, *more* disagreeable than the father. With what horrible coolness she puts his shame before his eyes! With what selfish, passionate, obstinate egoism! 'Oh Heaven! these people!' I cried out; 'I thought they were in their primitive state, and they are even more degraded than I imagined.'

"Amadée interrupted me, informing me that Roche Martin was waiting to take his leave. Roche Martin stood behind me, and had, to my great dissatisfaction, been my fellow-listener during the whole scene.

"'Dost see, M. Count,' began the old Acadien—'dost see, there is an example of what they come to by connection with the quadroons—they have to be lectured by their own children, and beg their pardon. Yes; old Morbihan has brought himself to this position.' 'He is truly a miserable old man; but the daughter—' I remarked. 'Is a very honest, modest, and virtuous girl, thou canst believe me, upon my soul! the whole settlement is full of her praise. But thou hast heard it with thine own ears, that she does not want to have her house dishonored. Ah! she is a splendid girl, and governs her plantation already, as well as the oldest planter. If it had depended upon her father, he would have spent everything long ago, with his quadroons and negroes. But she knows how to manage him!'

"'I looked confused at the man, and thought, 'What strange notions! If they are American ideas, then I fear they will never agree with my European manner of thinking!' The old man continued:

"'Ah! if Lacalle gets her, his fortune is made! That's a chance for him—the best in the whole settlement! She governs, I

tell you, her plantation as well as any I know! Pity that the old man causes her so much trouble!' 'Heaven keep Lacalle from this insolent, egoistic creature!' I cried. 'Do n't speak so foolishly!' grumbled Roche Martin; 'and remember that you are not in France, but in America, and in Louisiana, where they know nothing about sensitiveness. Look you! it was just this sort of folly, these *spirituelles debauches*, without which you cannot live, that brought Monsieur de Morbihan to his present degraded situation. His deceased wife, Madame de Morbihan, was a very honest woman, and one who tried to preserve order. See now,' he continued, 'matrimony should be like the food in a respectable, well-arranged house: on week days, bread, meat, vegetables, with a good glass of rum and water; on Sabbath and holydays, or a variety, something extra with a glass of wine. One must not expect to be *bonne chère* every day, that hurts the purse and the stomach—understand? You are accustomed to this *bonne chère* in Paris, I understand; you love to poach on other people's manors, and are adepts in the art of seduction—but here you have to be satisfied with domestic fare. If Monsieur de Morbihan had been satisfied with plain fare, he would still be the first man of the settlement; but he wanted variety, the *bonne chère*—he found it with the Creole negroes, and they cost him all he had. Now he has nothing but disgrace and contempt. You will become acquainted with these quadroons,' continued the old man, 'and then, recollect Monsieur de Morbihan—yes: what did I want to say?'

"'So you want to go home?' I interrupted the obstinate grumbler. 'Yes, so I do. I only stayed because mademoiselle invited me;—she is so pleasant, not proud—she speaks even to the poorest. But her father—Yes, what was I about to say?—she said to me, "I say! Roche Martin, you shall stay here!" And so I stayed, because I had yet to speak with you.' 'And what have you to say to me? Amadée has, I hope, rewarded you for your trouble?' 'Do n't speak so foolishly, M. Count!' interrupted the old man; 'neither you nor your friends gave me any trouble. But do you know why I have stopped here? I'll tell you. The old nobility here, as they call themselves—although most of them with no more right than I have to call myself a prince—will open eyes and ears to criticise everything in your manners. Now, don't let your bearing be too proud; and if you speak of the Acadiens, speak of them as you do of other people. This

will bring about good results.' 'I don't understand you, old man.' 'Well, you will understand me. Only do as I tell you, and speak of the Acadians, not as of dogs, but as of other men.' 'That I'll willingly promise.' 'For this,' he continued, 'I can perhaps render you a little service. Look ye; half a mile from Chetimachas is a neighboring plantation to let, belonging to M. Berthaud: you will certainly like it. Now, let Amadée go with me; he might close the contract, and from this start you can extend your new settlement. You will not be sorry for it. You will there become acquainted with some men, Americans, Messrs. Wood. They are the sort of people that will know how to commence the thing.' 'Your proposal is not so bad,' I answered, overcoming an impulse of anger at the blunt assurance of the man. 'I think I shall look at the plantation myself.' 'Then you had better beware. Berthaud is a Creole, and after the first three days they do not care a straw for a Frenchman; and if you go yourself, you will surely have to pay double rent. *Count* is written on your brow. Amadée has our manners, and crows don't pick each other's eyes out. He'll get the plantation, I'll bet, for eight hundred bushels of yams a-year, and that's no price. There are four negroes on it.' 'I want no negroes,' I told the old man. 'Do n't speak so stupidly, sir count!' he replied, 'and wait till you have seen, and know how matters really stand. Hire the negroes, and if you do not want them, use your own pleasure. Another thing,' he recommenced: 'you probably have money, and these aristocrats have none. Understand me; don't put away a sou before you have spoken to Mr. Wood.'

"My dear Roche Martin," I replied, thinking it to be high time to check the old man, 'I thank you for your good will; but spare your advice until——' 'It is required,' interrupted Roche Martin. 'You do not want anybody to look at or grasp your money-bags. All right—understand, what I said is only to give you a hint, which you can respect if you like, and if not, you can leave it alone. These aristocrats will certainly ask you to lend them money during the eight days of your stay, for they would all be cavaliers. Only lend them twenty livres, and you will have the whole swarm upon you, which will make the Attakapas a real wasp-nest for you.' 'How so?' I inquired. 'That cannot be told so briefly, good friend,' said the old man, in a sociable voice. 'It would do no good neither. Enough;

stay with your friends here, among these aristocrats, until you have danced your fill. In eight days you will have enough of them, and they of you, if it lasts so long; for in the Attakapas, strangers, as well as fish, smell badly by exposure within three days, unless they are dried codfish.' 'You give me a most amiable picture of my countrymen.' 'Your countrymen! The most stupid Creole thinks himself more than the Duke de Montmorency, if—he should come here to settle. You'll find that out. They will feast you, three, six, eight days, but then look out. Still, the devil is not as black as he seems. As I said, you will dance eight days; during this time, the affair between Lacalle and Demoiselle Morbihan will be settled, if the boy does not sink himself by association with the yellow quadroons.' 'Old man, you speak very plainly,' I said. 'I know my people,' he replied; 'you'll see. And now the Lord be with you.'

"And the old Roche Martin shook my hand, and in half an hour we saw his vessel, in which Amadée accompanied him, glide up the Fouché bayou.

"The prophecy, as far as it concerned Lacalle, was perfectly correct, spite of all the pains I took to withhold him from his rash determination. But he varies, as you can easily imagine, from one extreme to its opposite—from the flush of fever to a trembling chill: for Mademoiselle Adelaide was a Creole, and Lacalle was a southern Frenchman. His passion had now become irresistibly violent.

"At the last ball given in honor of us, M. Deblanc, the commandant at Attakapas, and as such, the lawful guardian of mademoiselle, gave as a toast—'The health of the beautiful pair.' The following Sunday, the marriage was celebrated.

"On the eleventh day after our arrival at the house of Monsieur de Morbihan, Lassalle, Haunterouge, and myself left the happy pair, and started for our plantation, which Amadée had rented. We had, for the time, enough of the balls of the Attakapas, and longed for rest."

"Your sketches of characters, my dear Vignerolles, are striking, but severe," remarked the papa, after a pause, with a little touch of displeasure in his voice.

The count was silent.

"Too hard!" interrupted the rash Haute-rouge; "if you had seen the subjects, you would call the sketches too delicately colored. *Ma foi!* you hear these descendants of peasants and peddlers of Picardy, Touraine, and Bretagne—there is not one among them, whose father, like Pajol, did

not possess towns and castles in abundance in dear France."

"Do you still recollect Monsieur Cordan," said Lassalle, "and the smoking pipe of his father?"

"That which the son told us, with real Gascoigne piquancy, his papa had received as a present from Louis Quatorze? with whom he had been on terms of brotherhood," laughed Hauterouge.

"Yes," continued Lassalle; "it is really amusing and annoying, to hear these good people boast of their papas; how they had smoked and drank brandy and water with Louis Quatorze—just as they did with their commandant; and how their mama's had helped the deceased queen on washing-days, and had, in recompense, received various trinkets—which, as a proof, they never failed to hold under our noses."

"Do not be angry, Menou," interrupted the count; "but the Attakapans of that time were really a strange people, and reminded us, only too often, of the bayous which had driven us almost to despair—a torn fragment, carried hither by the floods of the Mississippi, sent from the European stream of civilization, and gone into stoppage, cessation, and decay. I cannot find a more gentle expression, for the whole colony really bore a disagreeable expression of decay. They resided in uncomfortable houses, and had thousands of cattle, calves and cows on the meadows, and not a drop of milk or an ounce of butter in the house; because the care of a milch cow would have made too much trouble. They had slaves by dozens, but employed them in fanning away the mosquitoes from their mistress; carrying her reticule, or fan; rolling her from one end of the balcony to the other; playing with the spoiled children, and afterward causing them to be whipped by the overseer for pastime."

"There were some exceptions, dear Vergennes," replied Menou, with a face which betokened he had swallowed a dose of ipecacuanha; "for I know that the Attakapans had even, at that time, large cotton, rice, and corn crops, so that the signs of decay could not have been so very striking."

"Certainly, there were some honorable exceptions," replies the count; "and one of these exceptions was, as you know, the plantation of Demoiselle Morbihan; but the reigning tone——"

"And then the language of the ladies," interrupted Hauterouge; "this weak, drawling, and hissing, of each syllable. A word of three syllables, they never spoke

out, without stopping three times. And then, the inhuman coldness with which they could order their negroes to be whipped, and their cruelty to their animals. Do you see, a nobleman will, whenever he punishes a negro, never forget what he owes to himself;—the *canaille* is always cruel, and I have ever found it so. Slavery itself is not so much an evil, as that men, who have escaped the pillory, the whip of the prison and the galleys—men, born in fact for white slaves—can, unpunished, practice their mean malice on the slave."

"These words contain much truth," we confirmed, "although no white man is born for a slave."

Lassalle again continued: "We found among them, envy of everything higher: ah! unfeeling cruelty against men and animals, and an indifference to all mental civilization, which surpassed belief. Among a thousand Creole families, we found not twenty, who were able to read. They were at least a hundred years behind our French peasants and villagers."

"And about two hundred behind the Americans," remarked the count.

"But whence this phenomenon?" inquired several at once. "They possessed the same means for improvement."

"This phenomenon, will be more difficult for you to comprehend," replied Lassalle, "than it was to us, to whom the contrast was visible—nay, palpably apparent."

He stopped for some moments, as if to comprehend himself, and then spoke:

"I have formerly alluded to your proverb—that the European in America is blind for seven years; I must now explain myself. We Europeans, with the exception of the British, are brought up by governments, which look upon the political society over which they preside, more or less as upon their property, and consequently they treat it as such; that is, they instruct and model it according to their present or future views. They take the single man, with great assurance, not as consisting of an independent whole, an absolute being, but only as a part; as a zero, which, only by number, becomes important. We cannot reproach them for this. They act according to their hereditary, historically founded rights; and thus government has gradually, in the course of centuries, become a well formed, complete machine, which pursues its course in the same route it has travelled for centuries past; while the single parts move in the lines prescribed, and feel themselves hap-

py in so doing, as long as they are not torn asunder. Soon, however, as this occurs, and one wheel, or part of the machinery—or to speak more plainly, an individual or a fragment—of this so governed, civic society, is transplanted to a soil which has an opposite social principal for its foundation; then occurs, with this individual or fragment, not only an impediment, and consequent hesitation, but absolute suspension, and occasional retreat. In a word, an *opaqueness*, a helplessness, benumbs the mental energy, which can be dissipated only by time, and a more complete acquaintance with our new soil, and their own novel circumstances. The Frenchman, or the German, as soon as he enters this country, is always more or less blind; and, as I said, this occurs not only to single individuals, but with whole colonies, who, in their short-sightedness, instinctively attempt to transplant the social principles of the European world into ours, where, in civil society, resting upon an opposite basis, each individual considers himself as absolutely independent. These strangers are not capable of supporting, or comprehending the unanimous concurrence of free citizens—I mean, North Americans; who are trained from childhood, and have been accustomed to govern themselves, and to use and avail themselves of their powers in every direction. They become more and more isolated, depressed, and are finally devoured. Yes; in this material difference between European and American education, we shall find, not alone the cause of the backwardness of our French colonies, our gradual restriction and limitation, but the key for the solution of the great historical riddle of the British success seventy years ago, in obtaining, from the numerous and warlike French, their vast possessions in America. Yes! the progress of their peculiar system of education and self-reliance, will teach us how their successors, the North Americans, could force us Frenchmen gradually to relinquish our habits, customs, and even our mode of thought; and instead thereof assume theirs, in a manner which, before many years, will utterly extinguish all feature of our nationality."

"That's what I call hitting the nail on the head, dear count." I burst out, as this language of a Frenchman was altogether new to me.

"My observations were no more intended as a compliment to your people, Mr. Howard, than to our own," replied the count sharply, and almost offended. "As

Frenchmen, we have really no cause to thank you for the destructive influence you have had upon our nationality; but we cannot conceal the fact, that it is in the natural course of events, that a free and enlightened community will, ultimately, gain the advantage over one which is less so."

Our friends, the Creoles and French, were biting their lips.

"But," recommenced the count.

"We will not proceed," interrupted I; "the run of our argument would last too long, and our ladies would become impatient if the commencement of the ball is delayed."

CHAPTER VI.

LA CHARTREUSE.

"AND SO," continued the count, "we moved to the new plantation, which Amadée had hired for us from Monsieur Berthaud, not altogether to the satisfaction of our new friends, about whom you will hear anon. It was situated about ten miles from the real parish of Attakapas, and five miles from the plantation of Madame Lacalle. On it was a brittle wooden house, like all those of planters, with a broad projecting roof. The lower floor consisted of two large rooms, which were surrounded by piazzas; farther back an out-house, in which our servants slept; and in the background, three negro huts, the lodgings of our milch-cows and the four negroes. The whole was shaded by a few dozen of catalpas. About twenty acres were planted with corn, which we had to divide with Monsieur Berthaud; the rest was primitive forest. Simple as was our new home, we entered under the weather-beaten cypress roof with a mixture of feelings, which only they can truly estimate, who, reared in the lap of luxury, as we were, have been for ten years tossed on the stormy sea of civil war; and after all their sufferings, find at length a spot of earth, where they can lay down in safety and in tranquillity. We stood for some moments on the threshold, looking at each other, and heartily pressing each other's hands; then, overcome by our emotions, we embraced in silence. Our state of mind approached to superstitious enthusiasm.

"Amadée had, like a good housewife, taken care of all those small comforts and trifling superfluities, which are nowhere more needed than in this country, which supplies the commoner necessities of life

in such abundance. By the corners of the piazza he had hastily fixed our bedrooms, in which were beds, covered with musquito-netting. From the supper-table fresh wheat bread gladdened our eyes—a luxury in those places, which was at that time very rare, even among the richest planters—and some tender young bustards, which Jean had shot. We had certainly to use coffee and milk instead of Lafitte's, and pine-apple punch instead of champagne; but the evening was one of the most pleasant we ever prattled over. Several of our friends, among whom were Bossompierre, Lacalle and the commandant, had accompanied us, to install us, as they said, in our new residence. We stayed together until midnight, and then retired and slept. For years we had not known such undisturbed repose. With the next morning our planter's life began."

"I am very anxious to hear how you liked your new occupation," remarks Doughby.

"Why," continued the count, shrugging his shoulders, "in the beginning we did about the same as we had seen others do—or even a little more. We got up at five in the morning, grubbed and hoed in our corn-fields, or in the garden—which, as you know, we planters do; then we took a cup of black coffee, worked again, for an hour, breakfasted, and went toward the Chitimachas, into which a small bayou falls, at this place, to shoot game for our dianer and supper. Game and water-fowl was, and is still there in such quantities, that you only need to step before your door, to shoot in a short time, enough for a whole week. As the heat increased we retired to the corridor, and wrote, read, or played music—Lassalle and I playing the violin, and Hauterouge, the flute. The dinner generally found us with good appetites. In the afternoon, we played at billiards, on a table we had put up immediately on our arrival; sometimes, guests arrived, among whom were Monsieur Bossompierre, and the commandant, a merry Picardien, but this was not often the case; the plantation being too far out of the way. To visit our nearest neighbor, we had full an hour's ride. Thus, the first fortnight passed pretty enduringly; the next, somewhat less so. We had to relinquish many things, which habit had rendered necessary to our comfort; this we felt harder than we had imagined; for, in the adventurous, storming life of a soldier, your wants are fewer, and their relinquishment easier, than in the silent seclusion of a well regulated household; consequently, we had

much to renounce. The gratification of those wants, which had become so indispensable to us during our higher social life, could not be thought of. In the whole parish there were only two storekeepers, the nearest six miles from us; and the stores of both contained nothing but snuff and smoking tobacco, powder and straw hats, knives and forks, and blankets. Our cellar was in a very bad state;—a few bottles of Bordeaux and Madeira—retained for unforeseen accidents—were reserved as a treasure. Thus our planter's life began gradually to be disagreeable. We consoled ourselves at these shadows of life, with the hope that the coming contrast would be the brighter; in the failure of reality, we lived on dreams of the future; but they were dreams, the realization of which was still far distant. The land was a paradise, giving all in abundance, and almost without any labor. It only depended on us, to establish a happy existence; but a long time might pass ere this happy existence could be realized; our patience might be put to a severe test, and at least all appearances indicated this.

"The difficulties to be overcome in our settlement, became more apparent; even with our land-patent, some peculiar circumstances were connected. In the documents, a place of four thousand arpens to the west of the Chitimachas, and between the Teche and Vermilion, had been reserved for our family, without designating the limits more particularly. There was something like a proviso, which the commissary of cessation of our government had reserved, to the advantage of his patron, my grandfather, when Louisiana was ceded to the Spanish plenipotentiary. The commissary had received official reports about the beauty of the land, the mildness of the climate, and the fertility of the soil; but he had not been on the place himself. It was now necessary to cut out the four thousand arpens from the other grants, afterward awarded by the governor, to avoid as much as possible all disagreeable and endless law-suits. This matter was not easy: it was necessary to have a complete survey of the whole territory, a perfect knowledge and information of all the lands claimed by the inhabitants of the canton; all of which had the more difficulties, because of the commandant's having entered upon his post only shortly before our arrival: his predecessor, Monsieur Declouettes, had died; and to make the trouble complete, had left to his grown up sons the hatred of the whole parish of Creoles, as a legacy.

"During the fifty years which had passed since the beginning of the settlement, large herds of (so-called) maroon-cattle had assembled in the forests and meadows of the canton, which, masterless and unmarked, had been chased and shot by the inhabitants—being considered good booty, especially on account of their hides. At these chases, it had often happened that marked cattle were also killed. Complaints had been made about this to the late commandant, which brought him to order a search of the houses; in consequence of which, large quantities of hides were found in the possession of some of the richest planters. The imprisonment to which they were condemned, had left a deadly hate against the commandant and his family, in the breasts of these proud and half-wild cattle proprietors, which, as is often the case in such rough, passionate minds, extended to all who stood in any connection with the Declouettes. Thus a complete division had taken place in the canton: the old Creoles, or so-called nobles, formed one party—the Declouettes, with whom the Acadiens united, the other; and we in the middle—if not between two fires, at least between two chairs.

"This partisan feud, as ridiculous as it sounded in the mouth of the governor, who laughed at it, was very disagreeable to us; as the Attakapans, or nobles, had their heads so filled with this important question, that they had neither time nor desire left to move even a foot in our behalf; and to ask the Acadiens, or one of the Declouettes, would have been looked upon as open treason to the country. So we were confined to our own resources, and, God knows, these resources were poor enough.

"We tried to inspect the land toward the Vermilion, and to make up a location plan, but our eagerness cooled off pretty soon. The European, whose eyes are accustomed to limited valleys, meadows, and forests, has no idea of the confusion—yes, bewilderment, which strikes the new comer at his entrance into these seemingly endless plains, meadows, and forests. It is a giddiness which overcomes him. He feels bewildered and senseless, if he enters it alone, or accompanied but by few. He feels as if he were struggling in the mighty flood of the ocean, with the sense of being about to be overpowered by the waves. We had tried to reach the Vermilion in a westerly direction. This could be effected while our road lay over the meadows, although we often sank into the swamp to our girdles; but when we came into the

terrible cypress forests, inhabited by thousands of alligators, snapping-turtles, herons, and night owls; with at most a decayed trunk of a tree here and there to step on, and where one mis-step would hurry you twenty feet deep into the black mire—then we lost our courage. We tried to break through on the other side—through amber and evergreen-oak forests. Thorns, of extraordinary length and thickness, tore our clothes, in the very first hour, to tatters. We cursed the terrible land and our donation, and returned, in an ill-humor, to our home.

"Oh, how we sighed for our dear France!—not for the god-like soirées at St. Genevieve, the brilliant Sophie Arnould's—their fine wit, their excellent wines—no; but for a small, ever so small a spot, really cultivated, and peacefully settled. My grandmother had, in '81, received from the king, for her family, two lieutenant-general commissions, and the command of a cavalry brigade for her grandson! I was often about to despair, as I considered our position and prospects.

"As I said," continued the count, "we lost our patience. We had imagined it to be an easy affair, and thought to be able to settle immediately—build houses, and plant our fields with our resources; and there we stood, husking corn, digging, hacking; keeping siestas, and glad to be able to allay our thirst with sour milk. With all our resources, our bills and specie, we were not able to procure a dozen bottles of champagne. We almost burst with impatience. We thought we had no time to lose, and in truth we had none. I had finished my thirtieth year: Lassalle and Hauterouge counted a few years less. We two, Lassalle and I, had left our betrothed in France, and burned with anxiety to buy a herd and build a hut for them;—and here we sat, unable to go forward or retreat, and listening to the eternal stories of the good Attakapans. It would certainly have been an easy thing for us to settle upon a ready-arranged plantation, as several had been pressingly recommended to us for sale. It had even been thought strange that we did not buy; but we had our good reasons. What we saw about the planter's life, of that time, was not calculated to show us even its fairest side. In addition, we understood nothing of domestic arrangements, and had an unconquerable detestation of slavery; and it was clear to us that only constant, light work, in this enervating climate, could protect us against the putrid fever with which we found the good Attakapans more or less

infected: for, that whites could work their land themselves, without injuring their health, we saw, or rather heard from the Acadiens; who mostly work their fields without the help of slaves, and prosper by doing so. Thus was our condition in the Attakapas, after the first five weeks.

"The climate also had done its best to overtake us with those touches of sour, bilious temper, which had appeared so disagreeable to us in the Creoles, and especially in their ladies. And then the millions of musquitoes, which hummed about us wherever we went, or stood, or sat, both day and night! Our position was really desperate.

"It was on a hot September afternoon. We came from a visit to Bassompierre's, the same planter with whom we wished to remain at first. As we rode slowly, the parasols over our heads, by the way of our corn-field, toward the house, we heard a horrible cry and howl from the yard. We rode faster, and saw two of our men whipping one of the hired negroes. I cried from afar to them to stop; and not much was wanted to induce me to let the whip dance on their backs, I felt so indignant. Amadée, who stood by, and whom I reproached for it, interrupted me by the information that the negro deserved the punishment; for by his fault, our milch cow had broken out. These words fell upon us like a thunderbolt.

"Our milch cow gone—upon which our whole existence depends!" exclaimed we. "It is so," assured our servants.

"You know," said the count, interrupting his relation, "that the riches of the Attakapans, at that time, consisted chiefly in their herds—as the cotton, sugar, and rice culture was followed only by a few, and was still in its infancy. These herds were very numerous. Many Creoles had four thousand, or more, running half wild on the meadows or forests; and were driven once, or at the utmost twice a-year, for a few days, into the, so-called, corache—there to be marked and *adoused*, as the Attakapans entitle it. This was only the case with the active proprietors. Many often do not see their herds for years. This unjustifiable negligence has again its bad consequences; for the animals, equally exposed to heat and abundance, want and cold, suffer generally of some inward disease, producing spoiled blood or infected liver, and therefore are rendered unfit for use, although they look very fine. It had not been without serious trouble, that Roche Martin had been able to procure us a sound milch cow; and we were glad,

though we obtained it only by paying a treble price. To have asked of one of these comfortable Creoles, to have the herd, or only part of it, driven into the corache, for the sake of a single milch cow, would have been considered a coarse piece of assurance. This milch cow had ran away now. The negro, who had to mow her feed, had found it would add more to his comfort to let her out during the night; and, instead of attending to it, pay a visit to his black lady-love, five miles distant, on one of our horses. So, horse and cow were lost—the former, driven ten miles, without water or food, had died a few minutes before our arrival; the second was—Heaven only knows where to be found. The negro stared at us, but gave no answer to my questions. Now, I was almost sorry myself to have stopped Jean's arm.

"We were in despair. Never had a court brought three noblemen into greater embarrassment. We looked like poor seamen on a wreck without masts, on seeing the last water-barrel swept from the deck by the waves. But what was to be done? Good advice was dear. Without milk we could not live; it was the only drink we used, as we could not drink the Teche. We had to make preparations to find and catch the runaway. Roche Martin could give us the best advice; and so to Roche Martin we must go—but, on the way there searching the country, in case the unfortunate Martha, (so the cow was named,) could be found somewhere—and then learn from him what to do next.

"We had bought three riding and two wagon horses of Monsieur Bossem pierre. Lassalle and Amadée, it was concluded, should follow the western direction, more toward the Vermilion, and spy the country; we, to take a clear western direction. Just when we were about leaving, Lacallé arrived, and having heard what had happened, gladly joined us. Amadée stayed at home after having described to us, as well as he could, the direction which we should have to take. It was through a magnolia forest, from which an Indian path led into the large prairie—arrived there, we had to go northwest, toward the *Le Bœuf*; Hauterouge and Lassalle to the left, toward the Vermilion. Roche Martin's plantation, as remarked, was destined for the place of meeting.

"We immediately set into motion. It was the first time that we trod in the Indian path, which was to lead us into a district which had been represented to us as a half desert; only in some points inhabited by half-savage Acadiens, who, mostly sports-

men, had taken the manners of the native red tribes. We therefore, for safety, supplied ourselves with arms.

"The afternoon was hot—one of those September days which, with us, ripen the yellow fever. Our parasols over our heads, our horses protected with nets and branches against the mosquitoes, we rode on the Indian path through the magnolia forest. In half an hour the prairie was before us, boundless, like the waving surface of the ocean. On the farthest horizon ran dark violet-colored masses of clouds, which, with their golden ends, looked as a threatening frame to the dark blue skies. The evergreen oaks which lined the magnolia forest, gave, at the same time, those low, moaning sounds which generally are the forebodings of an approaching storm. Still, masses of clouds seemed to meet over the tops of the farthest seams of the forest. It was as if the excessive heat oppressed them also.

"For one moment we looked upon these grand masses of clouds, and then we parted; and soon we lost sight of each other in the high grass. Our parasols over us, we rode on in a northeastern direction.

"We had continued our way for about a quarter of an hour, when we met a herd of cattle of about a thousand head, among which were about a hundred horses of the half-wild Mexican race.

"Our cattle in the Attakapas," remarked the count, turning to Vergennes and d'Ermonville, "differ from those in France very materially, by their extraordinary fine horns, which are generally two feet and a half long; so that, with these and their long shanks and feet, when seen from a distance, they look more like deer than like cows and oxen—their usual red-brown color heightens the illusion. They pasture in such high grass, that hardly their heads or horns can be seen. They quickly, however, observe a comer—let him approach within thirty or forty steps—then snort, throwing up their heads, give a short roar, the horses neigh, and then they run off in every direction.

"Our animals pricked their ears not a little, when we arrived before this large herd, which stared at us for a short time, and then burst off on the wildest gallop. Then the excited horses which we rode—for they were out of the same Spanish-Mexican breed—started after them into the wide grass desert. We became excited ourselves, in spite of the terrible heat; it was our first wild chase in the Attakapas. For about an hour we followed, on a sharp gallop, after the wild beasts;

then, evidently unwilling, our tired horses gave up the race, fell back into a trot, and finally stood still. When we looked up, no horn, no mane, was any longer to be seen. The prairie was behind us—to our left and right—before us, an altogether strange, new landscape. Hills, rising gently to fifty or sixty feet high, which, swelling like the waves of the green gulf of the sea, were picturesquely sprinkled with dispersed groups of evergreen-oak, magnolias, and tulip-trees. We saw, also, some deer, which suffered us to approach within twenty paces. The river was altogether new to us. We had supposed the Attakapas, although a blessed and fertile, still a flat, monotonous, and feverish district; and what we had hitherto seen, had confirmed our supposition. Here, hardly fifteen miles from our plantation, we found ourselves so agreeably mistaken. We rode up the next hill; the view from its top was enchanting. The land, as far as the eye could reach, was (so called) rolling land—the hills rising and falling like waves, here and there interspersed with forest trees, through which the finest view into the farther parts of the picture offered itself. The sun neared already the dark, black masses of clouds, and his oblique-falling rays lighted the sides of the trees, which were turned to them, into a thousand glorious tints. The reverted ones were thrown into that deep *clair obscur*, which produces such extraordinary effects in the American climate. Each evergreen-oak, each magnolia, with its waving fans and cup-flowers, each tulip-tree, with its goblet-like bloom, showed a thousand tints of this indiscribly beautiful *clair obscur*.

"We stood speechless, lost in wonder, as we gazed upon these new and never-before-seen beauties. To finish the glory of the picture, some of the hills were surrounded with little lakes, lined with mangroves, which shone upon us like silver or golden veins in the magic landscape.

"Here is a glorious land—a paradise!" I cried, enchanted. "Here we will stay and build our huts."

"Lassalle interrupted the outbreak of my enchantment. I did not hear what he said. I saw nothing but glorious nature. Thanking the accident that had let me into these charming plains, my only thought was to see quickly as much as possible of the land, on which I wished to settle immediately. We rode down one hill and up another, which was reflected in a beautiful mirror of crystal water in the mangrove-margin, on which thousands of bustards and ducks were to be seen. I looked

again at the river from this hill, and I liked it even better than the first. We rode toward the third. In the luxurious feast of vision and anticipation of my enjoyment, when Eleonore would divide it with me, I had forgotten the cow and everything else around me.

"Do you know, colonel," I was interrupted by Lassalle, "that you have become a perfect egoist in selecting your grounds."

"I looked astonished at Lassalle. The rebuke was not without foundation. This egoism creeps over the emigrant in America, whether he will or not—another strange peculiarity, a contrast, which is always seen, between the inhabitant of this country and the European. Nature herself is the cause.

"I believe," continued Lassalle, "it is high time that we should look for Roche Martin's plantation." With these words he pointed to the threatening masses of clouds which approached the tops of the live-oaks, in which the rustling became louder and stronger.

"It was six o'clock. We had rode, and mostly at a sharp pace, for more than three hours. As far as the eye could reach there was no trace of a human habitation. Forest, meadows, and water everywhere; no hut and no house. In the distance, a clear strip of water glittered upon us from the forest, so magical in its effect that our eyes seemed to fix on it as if by a charm. We cried together: 'Yonder, men must live.' 'And,' I added, 'if not, I will build my hut there.'

"We rode quickly toward the beautiful spot, from which we were yet many a mile distant. Several times we stepped on hills to look around; on the last, at which we drew up, Lassalle cried, 'a hurrah!' He pointed toward a small bluish smoke-cloud, which, playing around the tops of the trees, was blown by the light wind toward the south; but no house was to be seen. The smoke came from a part of the forest, from which, at the same time a small streamlet emerged, as if poured from a cornucopia. The banks were everywhere trimmed with mangroves, mingled, nearer the forest, with weeping-willows, to which succeeded live-oaks, magnolias, and amber-trees. We concluded, at all events, to go into this delicious shade, where the god of the river seemed to have taken up his abode. The sun had disappeared behind the threatening masses of cloud, and the distant roll of the thunder left no doubt of the approaching storm. We spurred our horses, who, scenting a human abode, hurried toward the rivulet.

"We were still about a thousand paces from the place, where, according to our calculation, the hut must be whence the smoke arose. 'Don't you hear something, colonel?' inquired Lassalle suddenly.

"I had heard something: one of those strange sounds, which in our forests and prairies touch the ear so strangely, had reached my ear. We rode nearer. The sounds were heard again: they were at first harsh and shrill, and then like the laughter of a syren. Singing was audible, of a strange and peculiar kind, like the voices of spirits carried on the wings of the gale.

"Where are we, colonel?" inquired Lassalle. Instead of answering, I looked toward the place whence the sounds came. We rode on in the same direction.

"The rivulet, about fifty feet broad, seemed to be deep, as generally these rivers—or, in the language of the land, the bayous, are. It came so beautifully from the scenery of the weeping-willows and mangroves, that it seemed to glide through the branches. Again sounded the syren laughter. Now we recognized female voices, and at intervals the ringing of bells, and beating of metallic vessels, as if some instruments were struck together with force.

"We looked astonished at each other. 'Forward!' we cried. 'There is a pathway,' cried Lassalle, pointing to a broad footway, leading into the darkness of the forest.

"Soon we entered under the leafy roof of the live-oaks and magnolias: the syren-song became louder, the farther we advanced—we were already able to distinguish single words.

"The path led into a so-called fork, at which three different roads diverged. We followed the broadest. About a hundred paces we might have rode on it, when the darkness of the forest gave way to light. Some live-oaks, with grass banks around their large knotty trunks, a beautiful grassy carpet, finally an open space, and — We stared at each other in astonishment.

"A villa looked upon us from the other side of the river, scarce two hundred paces from us—so lovely, so enchanting! It overlooked the river from the gentle acivity, with the grace of a beautiful swan.

"What do you say, colonel?" asked Lassalle—"this villa?" "If the Acadiens are lodged thus," was my answer, "then they betray, at least, more taste than our parish of Attakapans." "Noblemen, you ought to say," laughed Lassalle. "Faith,

these nobles—but—' and he looked again abashed at the villa, and so did I.

"We felt very strangely. With all our anxiety to find a shelter during the storm, the appearance of this villa was so remarkable—so unexpected.

"It was situated about a hundred paces from the shore, on the banks of the river, which gently rose to a height of about forty feet above the surface of the water. Like all houses in the Attakapas, it had only one story; but instead of the ugly, broad, Spanish roof, there was a flat one, with a piazza on which magnolias and catalpas grew. The lower piazza reposed on white pillars, which looked like marble; the blinds were let down, and the whole surrounded by an iron railing. From the stairs, you descended to a garden, which spread from the villa to a road, leading around it in a semicircle, evidently to the smaller buildings behind the main one. The whole evinced as well the fine taste as the wealth of the proprietor. Lassalle asked, 'Where are we?'

"We stood there, looking at the beautiful villa, shaking our heads, and uncertain whether we should approach or not. It seemed as though the cottage of an Acadian would have been preferable. We ourselves could not understand these strange feelings. Lassalle hummed the couplet of Favard: '*L'amour, l'amour.*' Finally, we alighted from our horses, and taking them by the bridle, passed the bridge. This consisted of several large cypress logs, which united one shore to the other, and were covered again with shorter logs and posts, so that carriages could pass over. Instead of a railing, mangrove branches were twisted into a thick web on both sides, to protect the passenger against falling over.

"We had not taken three steps on the bridge, when we again heard a laugh just beneath us, in the water; and at the same time two rays of water, from the right and left, united over our heads. We looked at each other. Again we heard loud laughter and splashing—two, four, six snowy arms stretched out of the water, within fifteen feet of the spot where we stood; and once more two jets of the liquid element met over us. Presently a naiad-head peeps out of the water—an alabaster neck—a bust of Parian marble. A second head appears—a third:—three maiden figures rise from the element; they call a fourth—a black; we hear the noise of castanets accompanied by two female voices; the four girls take hands, and tread the water together to our astonishment per-

forming a quadrille in swimming style. 'Bless us! where are we?' inquired Lassalle, with a voice that sounded as if his breathing were oppressed.

"A heavy peal of thunder interrupts both the song and the dance. One of the piazza-blinds opens, and a female head looks through the window. 'Aspi, Leontini, Zoe! enough bathing! The Bo! do you hear her?' '*Bien, maman!*' laughed the three girls, showing their rows of pearly teeth. We stood behind the mangrove-railing, unseen by the girls; but the lady had observed us. She cried joyously: '*Eh bien! Pierre!* is it you? It be high time: the storm is approaching.'

"Thus saying, she opened the blind altogether, and displayed her bust. She now observed her mistake. '*Eh bien!* that not be Pierre. Messieurs, what want?'

"She now left the window with an angry movement, and appeared on the piazza, down the steps of which she hastened as fast as her *embonpoint* would permit. She was over thirty years of age, and had evidently been taken good care of, although her features were rather coarse than otherwise. She was a brunette, with rather large lips and black eyes. Her form was not, by any means, so fine as is that of the Creoles generally. Her teeth were admirable; and her neck and bust must still be termed fascinating.

"Meanwhile we had arrived at the house, leading our horses behind us, by a path which ran round the building, as has already been remarked. The lady approached us from the main entrance, through the garden. She was in dishabille. For a while she looked at us distrustfully, and then inquired—'*Eh bien!* messieurs, what want?' Behind we hear a whispering and laughing. Turning round, we perceive white dresses behind the mangroves, which line the river. '*Eh bien!* messieurs, what want?' inquired the dame again, in a rougher tone. Her voice was peculiar, resembling that of a Parisian mistress.

"Who is this person? How can such a voice have found its way into this seat of solitude? We experience a degree of embarrassment, by no means common among French cavaliers. To say that we are looking for a milch cow would be ridiculous. But what is to be done? 'But, messieurs,' she repeats, 'what want? We not take up persons we not know. We not accept visits from any not been introduced to us.' 'Pah! to make her respectability known here, where it is not doubted!' whispered Lassalle to me; and again we look at the dame, and she at us.

"Gentlemen go, we not you want; there the way be," said the dame, with a scornful laugh. 'Pardon, madam,' I at last said; because the question was now to get a shelter during the storm, which was about to break out over our heads. 'Pardon!' I repeated; 'we wish nothing less than to incommode you, or force ourselves upon your hospitality. We lost our way on an excursion. The only thing we ask, is, some feed for our horses, and a guide to bring us on the way to Monsieur Berthaud's plantation. We shall return there as soon as the storm passes over, and shall willingly pay for the service.' 'Monsieur Berthaud's plantation!—Monsieur Berthaud's plantation!' repeated the lady, looking sharper at us. 'The plantation has been rented by a sir count and two baronets, as we have heard.' She stopped, and examined us sharper. 'You in the Attakapas live?' she asked. 'At your service.' 'And where?' 'The plantation which I named, is meanwhile our home.' 'You on Monsieur Berthaud's plantation live? So, you the French count be?' She looked again at us, and her features suddenly became friendly. 'Aspi; Leontine; Zoe; quick! Ah! monsieur le comte, not want any introduction. You welcome are, wherever you come! Pardon, monsieur le comte!—but many bad gentlemen come to us, and we that not want: we retired live.'

"She stretched her fleshy hand over the railing to take ours; and seeing, now, that we were still holding our horses, she cried: 'Ahoi! ahoi! Sippi, Midi, Josi!—don't you hear? The horses take from monsieur le comte. Quick! the horses take. Monsieur le comte into the garden come.'

"And opening the garden door, she stretched out her arm, and took mine without ceremony. In this position we stood, when a pair of ragged negroes came, and took the horses from us.

"May I ask you,' I said, 'to give the horses first some hay, then a little water, and some ears of corn?' She turned impatiently, dragging me along. 'Ah! a monsieur le comte, and care for a horse!' she laughed. 'Ah! you no Creole be—it is seen. No Creole gentleman for a mean horse care; what gentilhomme for a horse care?' 'And this gentleman, who be?' She turned as we had arrived at the steps of the piazza, on the first of which she stopped, evidently to inquire first into the respectability of her second guest, before permitting him his entrance.

"Monsieur le baron de Lassalle, Madame,' I replied, introducing my friend to her. Monsieur de Lassalle, the young

man who married the rich Demoiselle de Morbihan.' 'Bien venu Monsieur de Lassalle!'

"And she examined him sharply for a moment from head to foot—a curious smile overspread her face. 'N'importe,' she murmured between her teeth, stretching over her left arm, and taking Lassalle's. While she led us up the stairs, Lassalle tried to explain to her the mistake; but she continued to prattle and drag us along in a triangle, the entrance not being broad enough for three in a row.

"Monsieur le comte de Pimperolles,' she said, after having let go our arm, 'sit down and pardon—Madame Allain back be immediately.' And saying so, she left the apartment, and we sat down and looked at each other. 'But tell me, where are we?' whispered Lassalle to me. 'That is no Creole—and still—' he looked around in the room.

"It was most tastefully furnished, and luxury prevailed everywhere. The furniture of Acajan and Louisiana cherry-wood—the floor covered with sea-grass mats, at that time very rare—the walls beautifully papered. The only proof that we were still in the Attakapas, was a certain disorder—clothing and other articles lay pell mell on the chairs, table and floor; and a strong smell of musk prevailed in the room. We were not on a Creole plantation; that seemed certain. In the lady's behavior, there was a bold and importunate daring. She wanted the modesty, the good behavior, the repose of the Creoles, even their indolence of manner. Who is this good Madame Allain? How does she come here? She has something about her of our milliners, or, what is the same, of our *bonnes*. Her whole appearance, her voice, her features, betray this. Has she retired to this solitude, with the fruits of her triumphs?

"In these conjectures we were interrupted by two negro girls, who came dancing along, with red ribbons twined around their bosoms to support their scanty garments. They smiled at us, and then began to take up a single dress, which they took into their arms as it lay, running out with it upon the piazza. Again they came and took the remainder; and immediately afterward a third, very fine black girl entered, and sprinkled *eau de roses* upon them. We were still gazing at the movements of the girl, when two others came with a basket of bottles and plates, and a third and fourth with pastry and fruit in their hands. They placed these refreshments on a table which stood behind one of the sofas, and

arranged the chairs. Everything was in the regular Creole fashion, except the mysterious Madame Allain.

"We had left our seats and gone toward the piazza blinds. The situation of the villa was enchanting. The lawn, about fifty feet long and broad, went almost imperceptibly down to the surface of the water, and not a single musquito could be seen in the piazza. The forest had been cleared in several places, but with great taste. It was park-like, and the trees were cut evidently to leave a passage for air. The garden lay at our feet adorned with the choicest flowers. Everywhere taste and elegance reigned together.

"The lady now entered again; she had hastily made her toilet, and as she came up to us in a sea-green-taffeta dress, she was all smiles and confidence. 'And how you the Attakapas like?' she began, seating herself on a sofa, and drawing me to a seat at her side.

" 'We would like them very well, if all plantations were like this beautiful country-seat,' was my answer. I could find no more delicate compliments. It was impossible; even this I could hardly bring myself to say. 'The chartreuse, yes, the chartreuse.' 'So, chartreuse, you have christened this most lovely concealment?'

"She paused, but looked at me with a lascivious glance. 'So, this Monsieur de Lassalle be?' she inquired again, pointing at Lassalle, who was still standing. 'At your service,' replies Lassalle. 'Ah! Madame Lassalle very beautiful, they say—very beautiful—I her never seen. But *ciel!* monsieur le comte, you all wet be?' 'A little,' was my reply. 'But, once more I must assure you, that you change the name of this gentleman with that of our common friend, Lacalle.' 'Certainly, the silly girls spattered you—horrible! Aspi! Leontine! Zoe! you terrible children! what you done?' she talked along without paying attention to my remark. 'The silly girls,' she continued, 'love bath and dance; nothing but bath and dance, even in river dance.'

" 'And dances which would not disgrace the naiads,' I interrupted, to pay at least one compliment. 'Naiads!' she replied; 'I do not know these ladies; are they respectable, monsieur le comte? My daughters very respectable.'

"Lassalle's mouth assumed an expression so peculiar, that I had to give another, and a more serious turn to the conversation.

" 'But, is there no danger connected with the bathing?' I inquired—'the nume-

rous alligators, which fill all the rivers and waters?' 'Oh! they them help; they cry, and sing—they on the pans and kettles, and copper-basin strike; they the alligators drive far back.'

"So this was the cause of the strange sounds.

" 'Aspi!' she said now to a young girl, who appeared in the parlor-door—'Aspi! that monsieur le comte de Pimperolles be—and that Monsieur Lassalle, whom Demoiselle Morbihan——' 'Pardon! madam,' I interrupted, 'you are mistaken. This gentleman is the Baron Lassalle, and unmarried. He, whom you mean, is called Ducalle de Lacalle.'

"She shook her head doubtfully, and smiled in a peculiar way. 'We know! we know!—Aspi! Aspi! So Monsieur Lassalle not married. *N'importe, n'importe.* Monsieur le comte, this be my daughter Aspi!'

"We acknowledged the daughter's courtesy; and as we surveyed her features, a light dawned upon my mind. They must be quadroons, was my first thought. I had not yet seen any, but I had heard much of them; and what I had heard was completely corroborated. Both mother and daughter were coarsely formed. Their lineaments betrayed African descent; and their full figures and snow-white teeth were not to be mistaken. All was there—the evidence was complete. I was perfectly struck by the daughter's mien. Her features were not beautiful, or even regular. Indeed, they were, on the contrary, rather coarse. Her eyes were large; and the white contrasted strongly with the retina. But in these eyes there was an intense glow that penetrated the very soul. In the mother's look there was something like triumph, as her daughter threw her head back proudly, and walked to the table on which the wine and refreshments were placed.

"At this moment the *maman* uttered an exclamation, and two figures danced up to the doors of the corridor, at which they stopped to look at us. Beautiful visions! They could not surely be quadroons! Oh! no—impossible! We must certainly have been mistaken in our conjecture with regard to the mother; and we inwardly regretted the unhandsome suspicion.

"Their youthful freshness—their childish serenity—and their innocent appearance, enchanted us.

"Leontine, Zoe, dear children! Monsieur le comte de Pimperolles. Permit me to introduce my two daughters, Leontine and Zoe!' And they floated nearer.

"Messieurs," said the count, "I have seen many girls, beautiful girls, in different groups and circumstances. I have lived thirty years, and several of these years were spent at court—but never had I met with two figures so charming—so enticing, as Leontine and Zoe!"

"They were dressed in white *peignoirs*. Slowly and modestly they advanced toward us—every step was full of grace. They blushed; and there was an ingenuous simplicity about their very blushes, that warmed our hearts and delighted our fancy. They curtsied bashfully, and looked at their mother and sister with such enchanting *naïvete*, that the longer we gazed at them, the more we admired them.

"The eyes of the mother were fixed in evident satisfaction upon the two daughters.

"But Leontine, Zoe!" she began, finally, and a peculiar smile overspread her face—"what you do? Monsieur le comte be all wet!"

"The girls at length cast a clandestine look at us. A low tittering was heard from them. 'As punishment, you attend both gentlemen!'

"And the daughters looked inquiringly at the mother, and went up to the table, where the elder sister still stood, and hesitatingly took hold of the bottles. 'Well, Leontine,' urged the mother, 'you still bashful be? and Zoe!'

"And Leontine filled the glass with trembling hand—what do I say?—hand? her whole body—each of her limbs trembled, as she filled the glasses. And the mother filled four smaller glasses—and Leontine and Zoe presented to us the larger glasses which they had filled.

"We drank. The wine was excellent Bordeaux. We stood for a moment without uttering a word. 'Monsieur le comte! you not go before an hour: you wait, the storm pass.' 'Do you believe we shall have a storm?' 'If rain—no: if not rain—then horrible storm. You agreeably pass your time—us excuse!'

"And taking my arm, she pointed to the sofa—a look, designated the place at my left to Leontine; then she took Lassalle's arm, and conducted him to an ottoman, standing aside. Mother and daughter cast another glance at the two who remained, and then disappeared behind the piazza-door.

"I looked at Lassalle, and he at me. His look seemed to say: 'All is not right here!'—mine said the same. But again, when we looked at those charming little creatures, who were now setting within six inches of us, trembling for their life, like victims, who — impossible!

"Leontine might have been fifteen—a beautiful bud, just beginning to expand, without the slightest taint which could be supposed to indicate mixed blood. Her hair, soft as silk, and still moist, was twisted in braids that fell upon her magnificent neck. She was indeed a study for a painter. Her *physique* was perfect: the oval face, with the finely formed eagle-nose, the dark-brown eye with the beautifully arched eyebrows; the colors blending, like milk and blood; the teeth white, small, and transparent, like pearls; the lips turned up a little, but of the most luscious cherry hue; the soft bosom, that had never known a corset, throbbing with unrestrained freedom;—and, finally, the lovely form itself, shrugging, stirring, and trembling, as if fluid quicksilver, instead of blood, flowed in her veins.

"I began to feel strangely. Two negro girls of fifteen or sixteen now entered. Their only garments, as was usual at that time in those regions, was a petticoat reaching down to the knee, like a Scotch Highlander's kilt. They were of the Madagascar race, and remarkably handsome. They cast a significant look at us, and then sat down before their mistresses like pet-dogs.

"Mira, the girl who sat at Leontine's feet on the mat, immediately began playfully to tease her mistress. They gambolled and bounced about the room with wonderful grace and agility, their feet scarcely touching the floor. Such was their *naïveté*, and so innocent, apparently, was their joyous laughter, that when their rich ruby lips came within range, I could hardly refrain from kissing them.

"You are doubtless aware," says the count, turning to Vergennes and d'Ermonvalle, "that negroes, and even quadroons, whose blood has often been crossed with whites, are very rarely perfect in our language. Their conversation is, indeed, no better than child's prattle, since they scarcely ever understand the use of the verb. This is generally rather disagreeable than otherwise. But the prattling of these two girls was so musical, that the vibrations of every tone seemed to send a thrill through my heart. I could not hear enough. Mute, astonished, and admiring, I sat and gazed upon them.

"The negress caught Leontine's foot and tickled it. Like an India-rubber ball, she bounced against me, rebounding and again returning, and looking at the same time so roguishly that I could not help laughing.

"Oh! what you got there?" she cried;

and already her bare, white, luxurious arm, covered by the peignoir-sleeve only to the shoulder, was around my neck, and her fingers held the cross of St. Louis which hung under my vest on a ribbon.

"What that be?" "The order of St. Louis, sweet Leontine," I whispered, taking her arm, and attempting to impress a kiss upon it. She bounded away in an instant, dancing round the room, and laughing at me. All this appeared to be mere fun, without danger; and she seemed to read this idea in my eyes. "So you not married be?" she whispered in an enchanting tone; and as she uttered the words, she sprang to the other end of the sofa, but in a moment more, her rosy lips were within two inches of mine, and I felt her sweet breath on my cheek. I was surprised, as you may believe. In the whole course of my life, as a courtier and a soldier, I had never seen such coquetry. "Not married?" she repeated thoughtfully, as if to herself, and with an audible sigh. "Not married, Leontine," I exclaimed. And again her eyes rested upon me. Her face—her lips approached me; they were not one inch from mine. I threw my arm around her neck, and snatched after them. She glided away like a ray of light. In a moment she sat at the other end of the sofa, but no longer laughing. "Fie! monsieur le comte! you do that once more—Leontine the instant will be gone." Her eyes became moist. I could not understand her expression. Hitherto she had been a playful girl; now she became a dangerous woman. There was an inexpressible tenderness about her manner that at once fascinated. European coquettes soon become tiresome; but Leontine became more interesting every moment; there was no artifice discernible. Now she seemed to doubt her conquest—again she doubled her exertions to please, and, after reaching a certain degree of success, once more turned on the defensive. There was a terrible, overwhelming power in her eye, that took me captive. The most charming beauties of vice-growing Spain were thrown into the shade, when, by recollection, I placed them in comparison with the little sorceress before me.

"Hers was not coquetry, as we usually understand it; neither was it positive vice, as far as I could then discover. It was a quintessence of all that is dangerous and attractive in the character of woman. To cold, calculating voluptuousness, she was evidently a stranger. She was, on the contrary, a child of the sunny south, taught to follow the guidance of instinct, uncon-

scious of the distinctions of moralists; and full of that wild fever of the heart, which might be expected in a fresh, blooming, pleasure-loving beauty of sixteen.

"Unable to endure her tantalizing manner any longer, I jumped up, and stood in the middle of the room. Leontine looked at me. Her eyes were suffused with a delicious moisture. Her negress, by a movement peculiar to her race, brought me back by gentle force to the sofa. Leontine once more was glad, and bright, and smiling. She was satisfied that she had won me. All her energies were now directed to one point—the maintenance of her vantage-ground."

Here the count paused in his narrative, and again resumed thus:

"At the time of which I am speaking, I had lived thirty years. The most irresistible beauties of European countries I had frequently seen: but never had I encountered a daughter of Adam, of high or humble birth, who could, with the slightest shadow of justice, be compared to the matchless Leontine! It is easy to condemn the weakness of men, who yield to the fascination of corrupted woman; but he who has experienced the power of the syren, will be more disposed to regard with charity his fallen neighbor. The thoughts of the heart are but the embryo of our words and actions; and guilt may be morally incurred by these thoughts, as well as by their more mature development. Bearing this in mind, gentlemen, 'let him who is without sin cast the first stone.' I shall 'nought extenuate.' My blood boiled; my brain was on fire; molten quicksilver seemed to course through my veins. I had no power over my actions. I jumped up again. At that instant my eye caught the head of the mother; and a glance satisfied me that the old woman had directed the manœuvres of both her daughters from behind the glass-door. A whole hour had passed away like a second. I turned coldly to Leontine.

"At the same moment a terrible crash of thunder was heard, as if the heavens would burst. I was terrified. The voice of the Almighty, at such a moment, and in such a place! It seemed to warn us of impending danger. 'Lassalle!' I exclaimed, 'we go!' 'Colonel!' he cried, staggering toward me. 'With Madame Allain,' interrupted the mother, 'stay! stay!' 'Impossible, madam; we are engaged, betrothed,' I replied. The words proceeding almost involuntarily from my lips. 'Qu'importe?' cried the mother, in a roar of laughter. 'Qu'importe?' cried

Leontine and Zoe. 'Take a glass of wine.'

"I took the glass; the perspiration stood in big drops on my forehead. Leontine took hers, sipping a little of the inspiring beverage, and drew me again to the sofa. 'We must go, Leontine; we must, Madame Allain!' 'Ah! Madame Lassalle jealous be,' laughed Madame Allain. 'The Creoles very jealous; their husbands not permit the least pleasure.'

"I saw that her mistake arose from our bad pronunciation, and that it might lead to the worst consequences. 'With your permission, madam, I must tell you that this gentleman is unmarried. He is, as I have said, Baron de Lassalle. It was Monsieur Ducalle de Lacalle who married Demoiselle de Morbihan; and'—— (it was on my tongue to say, 'I thank God that he is not present.')

"She laughed in my face incredulously. 'Count, you *Ganache* be.'

"This was a new word to me; but it decided me in my resolution to leave this Charybdis as quickly as possible. One visit of this kind, if known, would close upon us, for ever, all respectable houses in the Attakapas.

"'Lassalle,' I again repeated, 'we must go.' 'Must go?' cried the two girls, as gayly as if nothing at all had happened. Yet, in truth, according to their ideas, nothing unbecoming had taken place. In this we did not agree with them entirely. 'But you will come again?' inquired the mother. 'Certainly—certainly. Oh! of course.'

"The thunder rolled again, but it was now more distant. Heavy rain had chilled the air; yet, of the whole storm, we had heard nothing but the last two peals. 'We must go,' I repeated, urgently. My soles burned under me. 'Then go!' said the mother, angrily. And as we were taking our straw-hats, the tones of a piano-forte sounded from the saloon. The instrument was played by a masterly hand. 'How! you have a piano-forte?' In the whole Attakapas we had not seen one. 'Come! one farewell quadrille,' besought the girls. 'No! not now, dear Leontine!—the next time.' 'A Frenchman! a count! and refuses a lady to dance a quadrille!' laughed Leontine, without being offended. 'Fie!—Mira! Mira! come then!'

"And the two girls jumped up from the mats. After a few accords, the music changed into a quadrille, and the four girls performed the figures. The graces themselves could not have gone through

the performance more modestly or more charmingly.

"We continued to gaze at the handsome creatures. The quadrille changed into a minuet. Again the girls stopped and looked at us. They seized our hands and our hats. But we again firmly refused to dance. As they looked at us, a momentary cloud came over their brows: it vanished, however, the next moment. They curtsied gracefully, and were about to leave the room.

"'And so,' said the mother, 'your horses ready—you go?' 'Adieu!' cried Leontine and Zoe. 'Farewell kiss?' cried mother and daughters, the latter disappearing behind the parlor-door. 'What do you think?'

"I looked inquiringly at the mother. My glance may have appeared to her to convey more than I intended.

"'What do you think? You be in a respectable house—an honest house,' said she, bridling up. 'Certainly—certainly. Who would doubt it?' I murmured. 'You want to arrange!' whispered the mother; 'that be another thing!' Leontine—'Is a sweet child——' 'A dear child, who make me much pleasure, who be my pride!' said she. 'You have every cause to——' 'Eh! *bien!*' she said, interrupting, and bending down to my left ear—'Eh! *bien!* five thousand——'

"I looked doubtfully at her, uncertain what she wished to say. 'Eh! *bien!*' she repeated, 'for five thousand—dollars!' 'For five thousand dollars?' I repeated thoughtlessly. 'You shall have her!' 'Whom? what?' I asked. 'Ganache!' she said, impatiently.

"I looked again at the mother, and she at me. 'You soon come *La Chartreuse* to see?' 'Certainly,' I said. 'Adieu!' 'Adieu!'

"And away we went, with ideas and feelings which I cannot describe; for everything swam before my eyes. I still remember that I whispered into Lassalle's ear—'Heaven be praised that Lacalle was not with us.'

"Indeed, Lacalle wished to ride with me—an honor which I declined for some reason which I have now forgotten, although I was always very fond of his company.

"When we arrived at home, neither he nor Hauterouge had yet returned. It was late at night. Without speaking a word about our adventures, we lay down to rest. *La Chartreuse* had furnished us with abundant food for nocturnal meditation."

CHAPTER VII.

THE ALLAINS.

To us also this narrative afforded matter for reflection. A deep silence followed the last words of the speaker, interrupted by a sort of sudden and involuntary restlessness, expressive of dissatisfaction, and coupled with something very like embarrassment. Doughby bit his lips after his Kentucky fashion. Richards snuffed the candles. I stood up, and paced backward and forth through the room. This voluptuous picture, although extremely well painted, and strongly illustrative of a state of things really existing, had produced a disagreeable impression on my mind. I hate that straight-laced prudence, which weighs every word in the scales; but I detest ten times more this lascivious sentimentality, which, although delicious to the debauched *roué*, is disgusting to the real man.

Doughby and Richards, who appeared to be indulging in thoughts similar to my own, had also left their seats. We all looked at the count. He sat, plunged in deep thought. On the wrinkled lineaments of his face there was something like gloom. His heavy breathing betrayed suffering. His forehead was moist. The Creoles and French had remained in their seats. Papa Menou now raised his eyes. "Vignerolles," said he, "are you unwell?" The count nods, and falls back into his former moody silence.

No: his is not the countenance of the gray-headed *roué*, who seeks to revive the miserable after-taste of his debauched youth, and infect more energetic minds. The lascivious smile is not here that generally plays about the mouth of such a man, when he refreshes once more the pictures of his so-called gayety before his dying fancy. Again I looked at him. Now his eye fell upon me: it was dim and thoughtful. He drew a deep breath. We sat down.

"There is," recommenced the count—"there is a blind obedience to passion—to the dictates of our sensuous nature, which brings down man from his lofty position in the scale of being to the level of a mere animal. Once only in my life have I experienced this. It was on and after the evening of that stormy day, which left impressions as deep as if they had been made by a galvanic process. I was not alone. Lassalle was equally affected. It was indeed very strange. We were oppressed by a sort of mental nightmare. A sort

of anxiety, mingled with pleasing sensations, had overwhelmed us. Leontine and Zoe appeared to us like two terrible vampires at one moment, like two beautiful ones at another. We shrunk back from the awful embrace of the monsters, and yet we languished for their fangs. They would suck out our best life-blood and ruin us, but they nevertheless attracted us to *La Chartreuse* with invisible and irresistible power. To them, and their forest-home, our every thought reverted. We were indeed oppressed by a fatal and inexplicable influence.

"For eight days we rode out regularly toward *La Chartreuse*, but we always returned after having proceeded about half way. An inward storm drove us onward; an inward voice called us back. It was plain that a second visit to this syren hiding-place must prove our ruin, and still

"We had become tiresome to Haute-rouge, to Amadée, to our servants, and to the whole world. Like two young men, entangled in the meshes of their first love, we spoke only of Leontine and Zoe. In short, we were affected in a manner which you, or any third party, would deem entirely incredible. We ourselves could not have supposed such a state of mind to be possible, an hour before the visit of that fatal afternoon.

"On the tenth day, if I remember well, after that which was to us so pregnant with important consequences, Amadée came from the parish; and his features betrayed the distress and embarrassment of a faithful servant, who brings information which must disagreeably affect his master. He was afraid to commence his communication, and I to ask for it.

"Two horsemen came galloping into the yard. It was Lacalle and Hauterouge, who had been together for some days—for, as I have already said, our dullness had become insupportable. Both were very serious. They looked at us, and then at each other. They seemed anxious to speak, but could hardly utter the customary salutations.

"*Ma foi*!" finally commenced Haute-rouge, "I wish the devil had that milch cow! She has done infinite mischief." "How? Is she not yet found?" said I. Lacalle and Hauterouge exchanged looks, which seemed to say, "He is perfectly blind and deaf." "So you do not know, colonel, that Roche Martin brought her back the next day?" "Well, then, what else has the poor cow done?" "What else has she done?" replied Hauterouge, impatiently. "Why, she has given rise

to an amount of gossip hitherto unprecedented in the whole parish.' 'What sort of gossip?' 'That I was at *La Chartreuse* and danced there.' 'The hard hearing of Madame Allain is the cause of this,' interrupted Lassalle. 'We told her, at least ten times, that I was not *you*, but that I was the Baron de Lassalle.' Lacalle, who was only a simple nobleman, appeared to be offended at what he supposed to be a hint at the recent character of his title. 'At all events, it would have been better for the Baron de Lassalle'—he marked the Lassalle with scornful emphasis—'not to have seen the *Chartreuse*, as she is called.' 'With regard to that,' replied Lassalle, angrily, 'Monsieur de Lacalle will permit me to follow my own inclination.' 'As you like it,' said Lacalle, in a passion; 'but, then, the Baron de Lassalle must pardon me if—' 'Fy!' said Hauterouge, reproachfully—'fy! messieurs! Is this proper language between camp companions, who have ten times sworn friendship for each other to the death? I tell you, Lassalle, Madame Lacalle has declared in my presence that she would not receive either your visits or the colonel's at her house, if you do not discontinue your visits to the Allains. There is but one opinion upon this point in the whole parish. Every house is closed against you if you—'

"Thus far I had remained silent—but this was too much for me. I wanted to speak. Amadée interrupted me. 'And so is Monsieur Bassompierre's. He has said that, disagreeable as it would be to him, he would be unable to act otherwise than decline your visits, if you should continue to see the horrible *Chartreuse*.' 'I pray you, for heaven's sake, to abandon all thoughts of these miserable people,' said Lacalle; 'I should have to close my own door against you, or my wife would do it for me.' 'We are not in France or Paris,' remonstrated Amadée. 'Do not destroy our peace and friendly intercourse,' Lacalle exclaimed. 'For such creatures!' cried Amadée again. 'To quarrel with a whole settlement for such wretches, would be madness,' said Hauterouge. 'Do you know, colonel, who these Allains are?' 'Who?' we inquired simultaneously. Like blind fools, we knew nothing of them but what we had seen and heard. 'The mother was the mistress of a Spanish merchant, and whose family she robbed of the plantation. The oldest daughter is his.' 'Then the father has acted more justly than the world,' I interrupted; 'he knew that she would give happiness to his law-

ful children, but abandon to the world his colored daughter. He has done well, according to my understanding, to care for her.' 'Ah!' said the count, 'we become sophistically just, if passion is the impulse.' 'The two younger ones,' continued Hauterouge, 'are said to be the daughters of a French merchant in Nantes, whom she afterward, enticed into her net and likewise ruined.' 'The oldest daughter,' interrupted Amadée again, 'has a planter from Point Coupé as protector; who, as they say, paid five thousand dollars cash and rebuilt the *Chartreuse*, which is said to be the finest building in the *Attakapas*. He is away from his family, and lives also in the *Chartreuse*.' 'His name?' I inquired thoughtfully. 'Pierre Bournet or Bornet.' 'So this was the Pierre,' I said to Lassalle. Lassalle nodded.

"Our two friends and Amadée lost their patience altogether. 'Excuse me, colonel!' cried Hauterouge, in great agitation; 'but, indeed, here is neither time nor place for—gallantries. *Monsieur le Baron de Hauterouge*,' I said, rising—and the pride of the Vignerolles began to move me—'*Monsieur le Baron de Hauterouge*,' I repeated, 'I would be very slow to give you any advice, but I am just as unwilling to receive it.' To me this mixing in my affairs was quite offensive.

"'But, good Heavens! colonel!' interrupted Lacalle, ardently—'who has ever heard of a cavalier, and a man like you, taking a fancy to such creatures?' 'Whom do you call creatures?' I interrupted Lacalle. 'Yes; they are creatures—the most charming, fascinating, I ever saw or shall see—creatures who, though innocently, have been marked with a stigma even in their cradle—so marked, that the meanest Creole looks down on them as on infected beings. And why? wherefore? Because tradition accuses them of a few drops of colored blood in their veins—although, in whiteness, they are equal to the daughter of any duke of France. What is the cause of their moral degradation, but this prejudice?—which marks them already in the cradle, in their baby linen, for a trade which—oh! this injustice is horrible!'

"'You see,' said the count, turning to Vergennes, 'that Lassalle and I, at that time, used almost the same language which, a few hours ago, we heard from you. Ah! our human impulses, believe me, have often very doubtful origins!'

"'And who are they?' I cried, in a fury, 'who declare these girls unworthy of their society, their company—even their blood?'

Who?' I cried. 'Creoles—descendants of mothers who mostly—the history of the colonization of Louisiana is knowledge enough!' 'Who cannot pronounce a syllable,' interrupted Lassalle, 'who intoned every word as if they were tuning a fiddle, 'Z-i-r-a-i-a-l-a z-a-s-s-e, e-t-z-e v-o-u-s a-s-seu-r-e-q-u-e-z-e r-e-m-t-r-a-i a-v-e-c m-a-z-a-r-z-e d-e-z-i-b-i-e-r,* he mimicked them.

"Lacalle and Hauterouge left the house in a fury. It was the first time that our very friendly intercourse had received a shock; but passion is blind. For eight days, it had been burning like the fire of a volcano in our inmost heart—the contradiction——'Eh! bien!' said Lassalle, who had got up, and looked after both, as they threw themselves excited into their saddles, and galloped away—'Eh! bien!' 'we'll go too: Amadée, have our horses ready.' I did not dare to say whither, but my look betrayed me. 'We'll go!' cried Lassalle, immediately; 'now we will—we will show them——' 'That we will. Do they think that we came here to be governed by their poor maxims of matrimony and such like? Have our horses ready!' I cried, passionately, to Amadée. 'Monsieur le comte!' he said, in a supplicating tone; but his voice failed him. 'What is it—what do you want? Do n't you hear?' 'Monsieur le comte!' he said, louder, and again he stopped. 'Well, what is it?' 'Monsieur le comte!' he continued, and tears were in the eyes of the old man—'Monsieur le comte, have I not been a faithful servant?' He stepped up to me, and took my hand, which he kissed. I drew it from him. 'Amadée, what is this? Who has ever doubted your fidelity?' 'Monsieur le comte,' continued Amadée, in a choked voice, 'I have, indeed, been a faithful servant—I followed you through heat and cold, battles and struggles.' 'That you did.' 'I have followed you, as long as honor was with us—but in what you are about to do now——' 'What is that to you?' 'I would not follow you,' sobbed and interrupted Amadée, his voice failing him. 'But we do not want you—we go alone.' 'Just that. If you could take me along—but—you go alone. Monsieur le comte, we are not in France; here, no honest man could lift his head after such transactions. But, Monsieur le comte, if you go——' 'And if we go?' 'Then, pardon me, Amadée goes too.' 'But not with us?' 'No, but away—I will rather beg

my bread. If you only heard what people say!' 'Amadée,' I said—the words of the servant had touched me hard, in the most tender place—'you shall not beg! you shall not beg! Do you want your salary immediately? or will you await our return?' 'No! no salary!' sobbed Amadée. 'You receive your salary and five thousand livres—are you satisfied? Now saddle our horses—or if you won't, I will do it.'

"Lassalle had jumped up, and ran to the stable to saddle the horses. I ran to my trunk, opened it, and took a roll of money, of which I counted out Amadée's salary; then I took a bill of exchange for the five thousand livres. Amadée beckoned with his hand—I want no money. He then ran away.

"What is this?' I said to Lassalle; 'have all conspired against us? We will away—come!' And we ran, and filled our powder-flasks—provided ourselves with lead, cigars, some bottles of wine—took our guns, and hastened from the house. In the yard stood Amadée and Jean—both with tears in their eyes. 'When will you be back, monsieur le comte?' sobbed Amadée. 'Perhaps soon, perhaps not. Stay or go, it is the same to me.' Our servants cried '*Mon Dieu!*' and looked at us inconsolably.

"We had entered the evergreen forest, about two thousand paces from the house, when the sound of horses' hoofs struck our ear. It was Martin, the grandson of Roche Martin, who came after us on his little shaggy Mexican pony. 'Monsieur le comte!' 'What is it?' 'Do you go to the Chartreuse?' 'Why do you ask? You are an impertinent boy!' 'If you go, I wish you would tell me; for then I go home.' 'As you like it. Has Amadée paid you?' 'No; but if you would have the kindness——I have worked ten days for you.' 'Well—when we return. Go to the plantation, and continue your work; your salary will not run away.'

"The boy scratched his head. 'It might, if you go to the Chartreuse. The gentlemen who go to the Chartreuse have often, in less than ten days, made the salary of honest people run away.' And saying so, the young, obstinate fellow held out his hand, expecting the payment of his salary.

"We looked at each other. This language was new to us. Inextinguishable as was the impression which these charming creatures had made upon us—an impression, which became the more irresistible, under the strange circumstances in which we were placed. The language of

* Bad Creole-French for *J'irai à la chasse et je vous assure, que je rentrerai avec ma charge de gibier.*

our Amadée had already strongly affected us, and that of the Acadien produced a still stronger effect. We stopped, and looked again at each other. A quarter of an hour before, we were resolved to ride to the Chartreuse—now we hesitated. Surrounded as we were by Creoles, depending on their help, their good-will, their opinion; the danger to which we would subject ourselves by this open defying of the popular, although, to our thought, cockneyish opinion, came clearly before our eyes; and ‘Eleanor!’ suddenly cried an inner voice.

“‘We go a hunting, Martin,’ I said to the Acadien: ‘go back!’ ‘A hunting! then you want a guide. I know the paths up to the Opelousas, to the Côte-gelée, and most of the plantations.’ ‘We do not want plantations; we go to the prairies to amuse ourselves.’ ‘Then I’ll go with you. I would be afraid to stay at the plantation. Chretien is now hunting, and Grandfather Roche.’ ‘We will not go to your grandfather’s.’ ‘But you might, perhaps, need me!’ cried the young man, determined: ‘we’ll go hunting together.’

“‘We looked at each other. ‘Perhaps it is better,’ whispered Lassalle to me. ‘Take him along.’ And we rode, whither we did not know

of those magnificent forests, which stretch up to the rapids. The bayou was half dry, as is generally the case at this hot season; and it looked like a great ditch, in the middle of which a clear and tolerably deep stripe of water ‘dragged its slow length along.’

“‘Come on!’ cried his companion, who already stood on the other side; ‘a bold effort is half the game.’ ‘But when I am over this infernal creek, what then?’ inquired Gaston. ‘What then?’ echoed his friend, with a peculiar, but unembarrassed smile; ‘why, then, a cigar, if you’ve no objection.’

“And he drew a cigar-box from his bag, took flint, steel, and punk, and lighted it, holding the burning material to Gaston.

“Gaston hummed an air from ‘Iphigenia in Tauris,’ rode a few steps back, put spurs to his horse, and in three seconds was in the arms of his friend, who treated him like a brother—for, spite his reputation as the best horseman in his regiment, he had kissed the ground. The two friends, as they stared at each other, burst out into loud laughter. ‘Thunder!’ they exclaimed simultaneously.

“And they looked, messieurs,” continued the count, “like men who would have done honor to the captain of a company of volunteer sans-culottes, after a November bivouac of four weeks in the Bretagne. The one had lost both flaps of his nankeen dress-coat; the other was tying the upper half of his inexpressibles to the lower, by means of a willow-thong. Gaston had lost his hat; his friend’s head was covered by a straw crown, but the brim was gone. ‘The deuce!’ cried Gaston, ‘we look worse than these Acadiens after a ball.’

“Again both laughed heartily. They had actually come from such a ball in the Courtableau—a large hut built of wood and clay, in which a yelling bagpipe was screeching merrily, and around which danced a whole generation of settlers. ‘If we had only a glass of taffia,’ cried one. ‘Or a plate of their gumbo,’ said Gaston. ‘A curious people,’ cried Gaston again. ‘Oh! what would I give for an hour in the humblest restaurant of Versailles!’ ‘Or a chamber in the pavilion of the Duchess N——!’ ‘Or a soirée at the marquise’s!’ ‘Oh! Eleanor!’ ‘Oh! Gabriele!’ ‘But do you know I feel hungry?’ ‘And I thirsty!’ ‘And I both!’ ‘I am absolutely exhausted!’ ‘I’m half dead!’ ‘And both of us worthy objects for——’ ‘The humane association.’ And again the two friends broke out into a loud laughter.”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ADVENTURE ON THE BAYOU CHICÔT.

THE count paused and took a long breath, as if he had cast off a heavy burden. His features cleared up; his eyes fell upon Lassalle. They looked good-humoredly at each other.

Suddenly he cries to the baron:

“Quick! forward! Gaston! Ah! these cursed bayous and creeks, or whatever they call them—surely they have been created to afford men an opportunity of breaking their necks. Let your courser take the rein once more.

“These encouraging words,” continued the count, “were directed to a young French cavalier of eight-and-twenty, with whom you are all acquainted, exactly three days after the occurrence of the scenes I have just recounted. He was about to cross one of the innumerable creeks which divide the Attakapas from the Opelousas. In company with his friend, he had just crossed the gloomy wilderness that spreads over these upper regions; and now they both found themselves at the end of one

The count relates these incidents so merrily, so gayly : his mimicry is so truthful, his voice so fresh and sonorous. These remembrances seem to breathe a new-born spirit within him. He continues :

"The two Frenchmen, messieurs—to give up the incognito—were Gaston de Lassalle and his particular friend Louis de Vignerolles, who, as said before, had given themselves up to the guidance of the young Acadien three days before, to drive away their melancholy, or '*besoin d'aimer*.'

"They had wandered toward the Côte-gelée and Courtableau, spent one night at a ball, or rather in the hut of an Acadien where a ball was concluding ; the two other nights they bivouacked in the open air—their dinner and supper, a saddle of venison roasted on a wooden spear ; and thus they had gradually arrived at the northern frontier of the Attakapas, having gained strength in spirit and body, at the cost of a principle part of their wardrobe ; hungry and thirsty, as you have heard.

"It was an oppressively hot September afternoon. The sun had been almost burning all day, and their small supply of wine had been used up the first day. They had got the bottles filled with taffia, which they had drank, mixed with water ; but that now was finished also, and therefore Martin was on an expedition to discover new provisions.

"Far behind them lay the settlements of the Acadiens. Martin told them they would soon find Americans, or, as he called them, Cochon-Yankees, who had nestled in here, spite of the prohibition of the Spanish government, spite of the hate of the Creoles, and the envy of the Acadiens ; for all of which they cared no more, assured Martin, than we would for the singing of a musquito in the last quarter of October.

" '*Ces gars là,*' he grumbled continually, '*je crois qu'ils veulent manger la Louisiane et le Mexique, à ci qu'on dit. Et ils sont insolens,*' he always added, '*comme se la Louisiane leurs appartenait ces garslà.*'

"But in spite of that," continued the count, "we would now have been very glad to have had one of these republicans near us. 'Blow your horn once more,' said Gaston : 'I cannot—my tongue sticks to my gums. Where can that silly boy remain so long?' And I blew the horn ; and as I did so, we both looked up together, and the merry, daring spirit disappeared from our faces as we stared.

"*Eh bien !*" continued the count, "the tone did not give that clear, loud vibra-

tion which, in a cloudless atmosphere, gladdens the heart of the sportsman, and strengthens his nerves. It sounded gloomy and thick ; and the observations which forced themselves upon us, were not calculated to keep us in good spirits.

"We had, as remarked, arrived at the edge of one of those pine-forests, which continue from the Côte-gelée up to the Opelousas. Behind us lay a prairie, mixed with palmetto fields, woods, and thick primitive forests, and interspersed with bayous and rivulets, which fell into the Chetimachas and the Teche to the west of Le Bœuf. It was one of those beautiful meadows which, as often as may be seen or described, still appears new to the eye. A lake of fresh blooming and verdant grass, growing up to the very nostrils of our horses. To the right was a clump of palmettos, and both shores of the creek, for half a mile, were trimmed with immense trees of cypress. This meadow lay boundless before our vision ; farther up was another palmetto field, and adjoining it an evergreen oak forest. To the east lay an impenetrable wilderness of magnolias, paw-paws, evergreen-oaks and bean-trees ; to the north was the above-mentioned black pine forest. Thus the tableau appeared to us fifteen minutes ago—but this short interval had changed the scene completely ; icy and blue-gray vapors had settled around the horizon, and as we looked, became more dense ; the fiery-red sun became paler, the outlines of the forest disappeared, and between them lay boundless dry vapors, like terrible lead-colored veils. The air, hitherto hot but elastic, became heavy, and the prairie appeared but as a gulf in the cloudy curtain which rolls along between two capes, faintly and dimly glimmering through. And as we saw these symptoms of a strange phenomenon developing before our eyes, our features began to express that embarrassment, which comes upon the light-hearted as well as the strong, when they become aware of the approach of an unknown danger.

" 'Fire a shot,' I said to Gaston, in a voice which frightened me, by its hollow strangeness. The shot fell—the report was altogether drowned in the oppressed atmosphere ; it had not reached the water-birds, which we saw about a hundred steps off, swimming in the bayou.

" 'Where can that foolish boy stay?' I recommenced again. 'These Acadiens are more stupid than—' 'Silence !' interrupted Gaston—'silence ! Look at our horses ! what does that mean ?'

"The animals seemed restless ; they

pricked their ears, began to snort, turned half around, stretched their necks, snuffed the air and became strangely frightened. At this behavior of the animals we looked at each other in great alarm. They became still more excited. Spite of their weariness, they stretched their necks as if anxious to proceed in the opposite direction to that in which the vapors were still rising. 'We cannot stay here,' said Gaston. 'But whither can we go?' 'Leave ourselves to the horses.'

"We mounted, but were hardly on their backs, when they set off in a gallop along the creek, between the cypress and palmetto-trees, as if chased by a pack of dogs. The creek seemed to become wider; instead of the palmetto, reed made its appearance. Our horses became more frightened: all nature seemed dead. The cry of a wild-geese was heard occasionally, but it was shrill and gloomy.

"What does that mean?" began Gaston again, after a long pause. 'I feel sultry, and oppressed, and yet I do not perspire: blow your horn once more.' And we stopped, while I blew the horn again. The tone died on my lips, and I felt as if the heavy air pressed through the horn, back again into my mouth.

"The atmosphere was now so hot, so dry, that the curled hairs of our horses, some moments ago dripping with sweat, were as if pasted together. The animals stretched out their tongues, longing for air and coolness. 'Look there!' cried Gaston again. We looked. The verge of the horizon, before gray and lead-colored, began to redden to the southwest, and the vapors became smoky. 'Don't you hear?' I asked. We listened. From time to time a crashing noise was heard, with a distant rattling, like the platoon fire of a corps of troops in foggy weather. At each such cracking, our horses shuddered. The creek gradually became wider, the ground muddier. We reined up, undecided. 'We cannot proceed in this direction,' said Gaston; 'we must go back to the prairie, into the palmetto fields, where we shall find it cooler.' 'Well, let us return,' said I. And we rode back to the place where we had crossed the river; but our horses absolutely refused to leap over the bayou, and only with great exertion we at length brought them to do it.

"The red color of the horizon had meanwhile become more glaring—the atmosphere hotter and dryer. A kind of smoke had settled over the prairie, forest and palmettos. We took the direction

toward this latter. 'Look!' cried Gaston, 'only half an hour ago, that reed was as fresh as if it had but just grown; now the leaves hang down like the excuses from the thin legs of our *cidevant* courtiers.' 'Indeed, Gaston, this is a very portentous sign. I feel no inclination to joke.' Suddenly he cried: 'What is that?'

"The whole prairie, the horizon—all and everything before us, to the south and southwest, was a thick, boundless mass of smoke, through which the sun shone fiery red, but fainter and fainter, till at last it appeared but as a dimly-lit paper lantern hanging from the skies. The sense of suffocation was so overpowering, that the horses turned, snorting, and ran again toward the bayou. Behind this curtain of vapor, which now covered the whole prairie, we thought we heard a distant hissing, and whizzing, like that of many serpents. Our horses strode onward, panting, and trembling in every limb. 'What can this mean?' we cried again, alighting at the same time to look at them, but they hurried breathlessly on toward the water; and it was with difficulty we could prevent them from jumping in.

"We had entered the cypress clumps, which lined the river on both sides. The red stripe to our right became still more red, looked more fiery, and darted at intervals through the dark cypress, the large trunks of which still kept off the smoke. The crackling was now heard nearer. 'What can that noise be?' cried Gaston. In sudden recollection, I exclaimed, 'God have mercy on us! that is what they call a forest, or prairie fire!' 'A forest, or prairie fire!' he echoed. And we looked at each other as if demented, in stupefied yet conscious horror! The smoke pressed stronger through the cypress-trees. 'Gracious Heaven! what's to be done?' at length said Gaston, with a half suffocated voice. The tears started into our eyes.

"Suddenly our horses shuddered, as if shaken by an ague, and jumped forward. A troop of deer broke through the wood, just at our side—threw themselves into the bayou, and swam to about the middle. When they arrived there they stopped, not fifty paces from us, and looked at us, as if praying for assistance, with the most beseeching looks. We thought we discovered tears in their eyes; and fright was depicted in their very features. We looked at the deer, at our horses, at ourselves, and again through the cypress-trees out upon the prairie. The light-red stripe approached still nearer, and the current of air which preceded it was so intensely

hot, that the few drops of perspiration which still oozed from our pores were dried up at once. The breeze became stronger, a long drawn whistling, hissing, and whizzing sound was heard, which made our nerves shudder, then a rattling, and through the suffocating smoke, a light flame was seen to issue, and immediately a column of fire! What do I say?—a column of fire?—A sea of fire rushed in mighty volume over the whole palmetto field! The heat had now become so intense, that we expected, every moment, the very rags upon our bodies would become ignited. We dragged our horses, or rather our horses dragged us, toward the bayou. They plunged their fore-feet in the water, and dragged us along the shore. A new rattling and breaking among the reeds attracted our attention. A she bear, with her cubs on her back, came toward us; and soon after a troop of deer jumped into the water, not ten feet from us. We raised our guns upon the bear, the mother turned; upon the deer, but we gazed and fired not. Deer and bear stood within five feet of each other; helpless and trembling like poor sailor boys, in the dread storms of the winter's night, tossed on the roaring and fathomless abyss!

"A large quantity of other animals—wolves, cattle, and horses—appeared simultaneously, as if to seek in one element security against the power of the other; but most of them took the bayou farther down, where, becoming wider, it swelled into a lake toward the northeast. And, strange! as the animals saw their predecessors driving down, they followed them, each apparently without fear of the other; and we followed, also, as best we could. At this juncture, something like the barking of dogs struck our ears. 'Dogs,' we cried, joyously—'hurrah! men cannot be far off!' A salvo of at least twenty musket shots, answered our exclamation.

"The shots were not two hundred paces from us; but we saw nothing, and only heard the hollow report, which, through the thick mass of smoke, reached us with difficulty. The animals around us trembled at this fresh threatening, but did not move a step. 'What is that?' we inquired, standing in the water up to our waist. A new report burst forth within about a hundred paces from us. We now saw the red, glittering flame, and heard at the same time many voices mingled together, in an idiom half French and half Indian. 'Shoot all—all! throw it into the boat, or on shore—don't stop!' they cried. 'They are Acadiens, judging by their pro-

nunciation,' remarked Gaston. Again a report of shots, and this time some balls passed close by our heads. 'Stop!' we cried—'stop! we are here! Don't shoot before you see where and at what you are shooting.' For a moment there was silence, and then a furious laughter burst from their coarse voices. 'Shoot! shoot!' cried some. 'If you shoot,' we cried, 'we'll shoot also. Stop! we command you!' '*Morbleu! Sacre Pare!*' was heard from about ten coarse voices. 'Who is that? What right have they to command here? Shoot them down, the dogs!' 'Stop! stop! or we fire!' '*Sacre!*' cried these half savages again; 'they are nobles from the parish—I know them by their pronunciation. Shoot them down! the dogs! the spies! What have they to do on the bayou?' 'If you fire, the blood be on yourselves!' we cried, in despair, aiming our guns in the direction in which we had seen the red flash of their fire-arms.

"At this moment we heard one clear, loud voice exclaim, 'Hold! Hold, I tell you! What would you do?' 'Hold!' cried several voices, one after another—'hold! what is this? Hold! or you are dead men!' '*Sacre! cis sont des Americains!*' cried the Acadiens. 'Hold!' again cried the strong, rough voice, and in the next moment we saw a boat pass us; the heads of men were visible, and the boat hurried toward the dark smoky curtain, from whence we heard the Acadiens. There was a cry of 'Silence.' Then we heard some one call out, 'Monsieur le comte Vignerolles?' 'Here I am!' 'The count!' cried the Acadien voices—the count!—the count! who in the Chartreuse—ah! the count! And all broke out into a wild, coarse laughter. We became pale and red with shame and anger. 'Monsieur le comte!' was again repeated, and in the next moment a boat came up to us. We recognized the young Martin, and were immediately surrounded by more than twenty Acadiens and five or six Americans.

"The Acadiens had, at the first sign of the prairie fire, shipped in boats on their bayou, which unites here with the bayou Chicot. The prairie, with the forests and palmetto-fields, forms an angle, limited on the one side by the bayou aux Bœufs, on the other by the bayou Chicot. The fire, which is generally laid in the fall, drives all the animals naturally to the water either on the one or the other side. The Acadiens of the settlements Courtableau and Côte-gelée, had come now, to capture frightened animals. These Acadiens were half-savage figures, the men only with

leggings around their thighs; the few women in coarse chemises and a kind of vest. Our hearts revolted at the brutal manner in which they shot down the animals. The same seemed to be the case with the Americans, the oldest of whom addressed us.

"'Frenchers! will you go with these Acadiens, or do you prefer going with us?' 'Who are you, my friends?' 'Friends!' said the man, shaking his head. 'You quickly make friends. Friends! no, that we are not yet. But will you come with us?' 'Monsieur le comte!' said young Martin, 'these five American gentlemen are come to look for you. They did you this kindness, when they heard that our *vivres* had been used up, and that we had lost our way?' 'You seem not to have travelled much in the prairies of our Ope-lousas?' remarked one of the Americans. 'No, my friend!' I replied. 'I have told you already,' replied the man, with some pride, 'we are no friends as yet; but if you will partake of American hospitality, you are welcome.'

"We looked toward the Acadiens, who continued shooting, and dragging the dead animals into the boats or on shore. 'They are real barbarians!' murmured the old man to the next younger one, in English. 'They shoot more in an hour than they can eat in a whole year, with their fiendish, French, murderous wantonness.' 'I have a notion,' replied the young man, 'that it would be a good deed to stop this wasteful slaughter.' 'They are in their own country, sir; that is, in the country which belongs to their master—we have no right to interfere!' replied the old man. 'Do you live far from here?' I inquired, somewhat impatiently, for the heat was terrible and the smoke suffocating. 'Not as far as I sometimes wish I did,' he said, with a disdainful glance at the Acadiens; 'but still far enough to give you an appetite for supper, if you have not one already!' 'If you are agreed,' I said, 'we will accept of your hospitable offer!' and with these words we stepped nearer to the boat. The man said neither yes nor no, but threw a penetrating glance at us. 'So, you are a count?' he asked, after having surveyed us from all sides. 'Yes!' I replied more impatient. 'And if you will have the kindness—' The face of the man remained as calm as if he were seated quietly in his room over a glass of whisky. 'Then you are probably of the party whom they call aristocrats?' he continued, after a while. We looked at the man—what did he mean by that question? 'Why do you ask?' I rejoined. The man leaned his arm

on the gun, took a thin roll of twisted tobacco from a tin box, bit off a piece, and replied: 'Why do I ask? I'll tell you why I ask.'

"All this he spoke so slowly, that it nearly drove us frantic with impatience. Imagine a prairie, of about twenty miles length and ten miles width, with whole acres of palmetto fields, and all sides on fire. Imagine this fire approaching every moment nearer—on some higher places, where the cypress forest was open, reaching the bayou, and heating the water. Imagine yourself in this situation, encircled with flames and smoke on all sides—and add to this some dozen of half-savage sportsmen, who were shooting, like blind and crazy men, in every direction; and then picture to yourself this man and his companions beginning a long, drawing conversation in their boat, while we were standing over girdles in water. Never had French patience been subjected to a severer trial. We writhed like serpents, forward, backward, but all was of no avail—the man stood like a statue.

"'I'll tell you; I have heard much of aristocrats in my life,' he continued, with the most provoking coolness—'much for and against the aristocrats. It seems they are after them, now, in the old word, and many come over to us; I have not got a clear notion of what they really are, but I'll tell you my opinion.' 'For God's sake!' both of us cried out. 'I'll tell you my opinion, man,' continued the old American. 'During the time I lived in the Old Dominion, and had commerce over to Frederickstown, I was a drover, man! Stopped generally in Bullock's tavern—good, tavern, man!—excellent tavern. Well, once when I stopped there, with a pretty large drove, on my way over to Philadelphia, there arrived two fellows—they were two Frenchmen; the one had arrived with the mail, the other on foot. The one on foot was a fine young chap, of twenty years or more; the other might have been thirty—about your age; ain't it so?' I looked at the man, and did not know whether to curse or laugh. 'Well and good! these two Frenchmen eat with us at table, and it must have been some time since they had laid in provisions, for they ate like wolves. Well, when we were done, I saw the young man speaking to the landlady, who looked kind-o'-suspicious at him at first, but afterward seemed to be persuaded by his pretty face to the fulfilment of his wish. What his wish was, you will soon hear. He gave her a small bundle, which she again gave to the

servant, an old negress. Well,' continued the man, (and in spite of heat and smoke, we were anxious to know what the young man had to do with the hostess)—'Well,' drawled he, 'we kept silent—took off our boots—took the slippers from behind the bar, and went to our sleeping-room. Well, there were six beds, and each already occupied by two, except mine, and another one, where the two Frenchmen were to sleep. They came immediately after us—the two Frenchmen, and undressed, just like us, and the oldest threw himself right into bed, but the younger still tarried. And we looked at the whole proceeding, for we could see very clear, the full moon shining into the room, so that we could distinguish everything. And as the young man was tarrying in this way, and pulled off his dress so slowly, we remarked that he had no shirt on; and this, you understand, of course, he did not want everybody to know. He yet had a shirt, you must know, which he had given to the hostess in the bundle, and which she had given to the negress to get it washed, as we afterward heard, and had therefore none on his body; because he owned only the one, I've-a-notion!'

"My good man!" interrupted I, 'will you have the kindness to fulfil your friendly offer, so?'—I could not speak more; for the smoke had become so suffocating, and we so impatient, so mad, that we could, with pleasure, have choked ourselves and him.

"And who could have felt otherwise," interrupted the count himself, "in the midst of this frightful spectacle of smoke and flame?"

"Richards!" I said, smiling to my friend, 'this even beats our Mr. Shifty of Tennessee.' Richards nodded laughingly.

"The old man stood immovable," continued the count; "the first peasant, who brought clearly before my eyes the words of the poet: *Totus si illabatur obis*.

"Well," he continued, 'as the young Frenchman turns and goes toward the bed, and lifts the blanket under which the other already lay to take his place there also, the one already in bed, jumped up like a madman, and sputtered a whole load of his French jargon. I did not understand a single word, and only heard *Sacri mende di dich*. But then my bed-fellow, who lay beside me, and who had served in the revolutionary war under Lafayette and Rochambeau, told me that Monshur was very mad, because the boy wanted to lay down without his shirt—that he also asked whether he thought to sleep with him without a shirt,

and he would rather be hanged than to let a shirtless fellow sleep by his side. And the young man was so ashamed at the noise which his countryman raised. We saw it plainly in the moonlight, though he could not open his mouth for some minutes. And the eldest one seemed to be just the sort of a man who likes to provide for his own comfort, and does not care a fiddlestick for anybody else. Well, the young man stood there irresolute, stepping forward and backward, and I have a notion, felt kind o' shamed, you know, because he had no shirt on his back, although he owned one, which, as you know, the negress had to wash. Well, the older Frenchman cried out again, as my bed-fellow told me, and that as loud as the major of a volunteer battalion before the line: "Do you want to come into this bed without a shirt?" And again the young chap got frightened at the thundering voice of the man, and we looked to see how it would end, and I had a great mind to tell the elder to let his tongue be a little less noisy, or I would try to bring him to silence pretty quick. But just then, the young fellow took courage and answered him. "You are a cursed aristocrat," he said, "a cursed aristocrat." 'And you a sans-culotte!' said the other, 'and I'll be hanged,' says he, putting one leg out of the bed, and showing it to the young man in the moonlight—he was full six feet high—the eldest—"I'll be hanged," says he, "if you'll sleep in this bed! You are no Frenchman," says he, "for no Frenchman would dishonor his nation so far as to sleep without a shirt, in the same room with gentlemen!" "And you are no Frenchman, but a cursed aristocrat! If you were a Frenchman, you would have kept still, and would not have exposed the honor of a countryman; but you are a cursed aristocrat, who does not care for the honor of France—and I do not want to sleep with you!" At this dispute for and against the honor of France, the host, the negress, and the servant came in; and as they heard what had happened, they took the young man along, and fixed another bed for him. The hostess had ordered it, because she took pity on him.'

"And the old fellow," continued the count, 'paused after this horrible exposition, and looking at us with a deliberate and inquisitive glance. 'Now tell me,' he asked, in a slow and important voice, 'was that an aristocrat?' We both replied as quick as possible: 'No, no: that was no aristocrat—dear, good, old friend, but a mean fellow; otherwise he would, to a poor distressed traveller—'

"We could not say more; for smoke, heat, fright, and exhaustion had reached the highest degree, so that even the old man had to wipe his eyes from time to time with his bear's paws, and gasp for breath. He paused again, looked around him, then shaking his head, said to his companion, 'I've a notion we'd best get out of the way, as the fire won't!' Again he paused. 'So that was no aristocrat?' he asked, after a few moments, turning toward us. We gave no answer—we could not give any. 'Well, then,' he continued, 'come into the boat, then. John, take the two animals, and we will see: the sooner the better.' Saying this, he lifted us into the boat, after having drawn up our trembling horses. It was high time, for our strength had left us. Of all that happened afterward, we heard. We saw no more—we sank down insensible!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE CYPRESS SWAMP.

"We lay senseless in the boat," continued the count, "but how long we remained in this state, I cannot say; it might have been a quarter of an hour. Finally we recovered from our swoon, and the old man, holding a bottle of taffia in his hand, asked if we did not want a little refreshment; 'We might need it,' he thought. Hastily and with half-closed eyes we seized the bottle, and took a good draught. The whisky strengthened us wonderfully, and we soon opened our eyes.

"Before us lay an immense cypress swamp—behind us, the broad mirror of the waters of the uniting bayous, beyond which was a terrible mass of smoke; so that we saw the steel-like water below, and the blue skies above, which last, farther to the west, was hidden from our view, by the immense columns of smoke. From time to time, flames were seen glittering through them, and the large forests of cypress appeared like a sea of fire. 'Are we safe from the fire?' Inquired shuddering. 'Safe enough,' replied the old man. 'But it's growing late; the sun will not stay an hour longer on the horizon, and we've got a fine way before us still.' 'And where does this way lead?' I inquired. 'Where does it go, do you mean?' said he—'well, where it goes, depends just on yourself. It goes through the cypress swamp, if you do not prefer the way round.' 'The shortest way is the best,' was my reply. 'The shortest way is the best,' grumbled the old man, turn-

ing to his companions; 'there you see the Frenchman again. We'll take it to please him—I believe it is just as well. 'James,' he said to one of the men, 'you go farther down through the snapping-turtle swamp; we go right through.' 'But our horses,' I remarked. 'Your horses go by the longer way above, until the fire has raged out. I have a notion that we'll get rain to-night, and then they won't burn their hoofs.' 'And whither shall we—' 'You ask too much, man,' replied the old man, abruptly: 'wait and see.'

"We arrived at the borders of the lake, which, as I said before, was formed at this point by the union of the two bayous, and before us lay the cypress swamp. I had already become acquainted with these swamps," continued the count, "although only partially, for we had found it impossible to get far into them. But when I looked upon this melancholy darkness, I thought I must ask once more: 'Old man, is there a way or a path through this swamp?' 'Way or path?' rejoined the man; 'no gentleman's park, I assure you. Way or path?—yes; the way and path which dried nature has formed for you.' He jumped upon the trunk of a tree, which was sticking from the bottomless abyss, and covered with moss and lyanes. 'Do you see? this is the path.' 'Then we will rather take the longer way,' I rejoined. 'But where are our horses? I do not see them.' 'Do as you think best; we go. I must also tell you, that if you cannot, in case of need, eat reed-leaves for supper, like your horses, you will hardly get anything across your tongue for the next twenty-four hours.' 'But there are water-fowl, and game?' 'Oh, yes! they are plenty, if you want to eat them raw, like the Indians, or if you know, within two miles round, a square yard of terra firma to make a fire.' 'Pshaw! we only lose time,' grumbled the men.

"To tell the truth, I became frightened at these men and at their language. It was stern and relentless. We were accustomed to have our wishes promptly fulfilled by persons of this class, and could hardly bear to find ourselves tortured, and in such a coarse manner. We looked alternately at the old man and his companions. We had no good opinion of the Americans, and especially of those Americans who had come as squatters, into every part of Louisiana. We had heard them spoken of as persons who do not fear God or man, relying on their arm, their axe, and their rifles, living far in the forest, like savages, and in a kind of log-

cabins; who stole cattle, principally horses, lived on corn and salt meat, and were not far behind the Indians in barbarism. We were told that, shortly after our arrival in the Attakapas, in the parts of the country where we were now, one of those half-savage republicans had successfully resisted a siege of his cabin, or block-house, made by the troops of the Government. He had made a felonious attack upon the western parishes of Louisiana, caught a troop of wild horses, was discovered on his way toward the Mississippi, and pursued to his block-house, where he had sustained a murderous conflict. The rumor was, without doubt, embellished; but if only half what we had heard about these people was true, we were not exactly in desirable company.

"As these thoughts were one after the other crossing our minds, we looked once more at the man and his companions. He was over six feet high, with haggard aspect; his veins and bones betrayed extraordinary strength; his features were sharp, especially the eyes, which had a real falcon flash; his mien showed perfect self-confidence—indeed, his whole demeanor toward us expressed more pity than respect. Yet, spite of his dignity, his dress consisted only of a leather jacket, with a girdle, in which a long knife was sticking; short leather breeches, a straw hat, which had lost its brim, and moccasins. His companions were dressed in a similar fashion.

"'But where is Martin?' inquired Lassalle. 'Do you mean the young Acadien, who requested us to take care of you?' rejoined the old man. 'Just him.' The old man pointed toward the smoke-cloud. 'There he will be found, I have a notion; that is, when their fiendish shooting is over. I do not hear any more reports.' 'Then let us go to him; but where are our horses?' 'I have a notion,' rejoined one of the young men, 'the Frencher there does not know himself what he wants. Your horses are pasturing about a mile above, in the reeds; you would not want us to swim the poor animals for half a mile through the bayou, behind the boat? Bill is with them.' 'And what does he want with them?' 'Joe goes up in the boat, and when the fire is over, you will see the rest. Your horses! why, you don't think that we—'

"The old man did not utter the words, but his features changed into a proud and scornful smile. I had closely observed him, and so had Lassalle. We replied, both at the same time, that we would go with him, and entrust ourselves to his

care. 'You do right in this,' was his short answer. 'James!' he said, turning to one of the young men, 'you go also with Joe further down through the snapping-turtle swamp; we cut right through here. But it would not hurt, if we should provide ourselves immediately with pine-torches.' 'Pine-torches?' we asked. 'The look which the old man threw at the leaving party, seemed to say: 'Must you meddle in everything?' Then, turning to us, he abruptly replied: 'Ay, pine-torches, and in the cypress swamp they are worth as much as your lives, if you had ten of them.' 'A strange language these people speak,' whispered Lassalle to me.

"The old man had, meanwhile, made a fire, and lit one of the chips which lay in the boat—but with that slow deliberation which, spite of our disagreeable situation, brought a smile to our lips. He lighted a second one, looked once more back at the bayou after the boat, which had already become invisible in the reeds, and then he raised his foot: 'This cursed Spanish swamp,' he grumbled, 'if it was true American, it would stand out, like an honest man, until you had caught it with your arms and feet; and would not give way, and draw you down like this traitorous Spanish—ay, down, I tell you—down it would have you, if your heads were twenty feet from your soles! Follow me, step by step, as if you trod on eggs!' he said to us—'and you, Joe, have an eye upon the two Frenchers; and don't wait until you see their legs in the swamp, above their moccasins.'

"We did not feel much enlivened by these consolatory orders; but, summoning all our courage, we stepped after the old man. Thus we walked about fifty steps into the swamp. Hitherto, the sun had lighted our path; the cypress-trees stood about ten or fifteen feet from each other; the majestic trunks rising some fifty feet high before the branches came out, in a sort of parasol shape—trunk upon trunk, crown upon crown—so that the swamp looked like a boundless roof, through which not a single sunbeam could penetrate. We saw the reflection of the light of day, still falling upon the banks, change into gloomy darkness, and then pass into night. In proportion as daylight decreased, the vapors of the swamp became more dense, suffocating, and infectious. The light of our pine-torches, which at first had burned brightly, became more and more dim, until at last they only flickered before our eyes, like jack-o'-lanterns. 'Yes! yes!' murmured the old man again—'a night passed

in this swamp, might bring the poisonous ague-cake upon you. What!—a night? Half an hour might do it, if you have but three pores open on your whole body. But there is no fear—for, after all, the prairie-fire has its benefits: it dries perspiration and closes the pores.'

"And as the man was grumbling this to himself, he continued his way, examining, and always lighting up the trunks of the trees ere he would put his foot upon them; but with an agility, which showed that he had trod this dangerous way frequently before. 'Only follow me,' he grumbled again; 'but make yourselves light, you Frenchers; as light as a Frencher can make himself—hold your breath. Ah! beware the log there! Halloo! Nathan!' he cried to himself—'Halloo! you was pretty nigh being cheated there. An old swamp-trotter like you, and take a sixteen-feet-long alligator for the trunk of a tree!'

"The old man had his foot lifted, stretched forward, and was in the act of stepping, when, fortunately he first tried, with the muzzle of his gun, what he had thought the trunk of a tree—the supposed trunk gave away; and the old man, jumping back, bounced against me with such force, that I had almost fallen into the swamp. 'Ah! you treacherous rascal!' he cried, anything but frightened, 'do you think to betray honest people with your devilries?' 'What is it, old man?' 'What is it!' he replied, drawing his large butcher-looking knife—'nothing, only that's an alligator. There! do you see him?' And instead of the log, which had disappeared, the jaws of the alligator yawned before us.

"I raised my gun. 'Don't shoot, monshur,' whispered the old man to me—'don't shoot, as long as you can help it! You are not alone here. That will do!' he said, bending slowly down, and striking his long knife into the eye of the monster, who turned around, with a terrible roar, so furiously as to spatter us all over with the black mire of the swamp. 'There! take that!' said the old man, laughing; 'and this—and that!' giving to the animal, which still snapped at him, some more stabs between the neck and ribs. And then he slowly wiped the blood off the knife, put it into his girdle, and looked carefully around. 'I have a notion, that there must be a tree somewhere about here; I am not for the first time on this track. There it is! but good six feet off. Now Frenchers, your dancing feet are worth something.'

"And so saying, he jumped with a single leap at that which he called a tree.

'For Heaven's sake, man. are you in the water?' said I, for I thought I saw it glittering. 'Pah! water! what you take to be water, is nothing but a few poor devils of snakes—honest mecasson, and false congo snakes; they shall live too; good food for our hogs—get on.' Necessity gave me power. I pressed my left foot as firm against the tree as I could, and jumped over: Lassalle followed me. 'Bravo!' cried the old man—'hurrah for the Frenchers and you too, second monshur! In this manner we may get on. A few more such passages, and then it goes better.'

"And we went on, step by step, lifting one foot, putting it easily down, and withdrawing it, till we thought we had found solid ground; at the same time trying the trees with our guns. A quarter of an hour had made us quite adepts, for need will teach even the most awkward. And here was need, in good earnest. The cypress swamp stretched, for about four or five miles, along the bayou. It was a deep, black bog swamp, spread with a dirty, yet light green and treacherous mat of ivy and lichen-moss, which had covered the swamp and the trees. These trees did not lie regularly, but still in a manner that made it evident the hand of man had been active here. 'Tell me,' I commenced, 'it seems as if a path goes through here; for —' 'Keep still,' said the old man, 'until we are on solid ground—keep still, for your life! don't mind the snakes, only follow me.'

"I lifted my foot again, and was about to put it down, when by the flickering light of the pine-torch I saw, four inches from my foot, a terrible alligator's jaws, snapping over the tree at my leg with such agility, that I had hardly time to fire my gun into his glittering lizard eye. He bounced back, gave a roar, flew several times around in the swamp, and sank dead.' The old man looked around, and a smile of satisfaction played around his open lips; but I heard not what he said, for the voices which now broke out on all sides, were so horrible, that I was completely deafened for some moments. Thousands and thousands of alligators, bull-frogs, night-owls, ahingas, and herons, which lived in the mire and under the leaves of the cypress, raised their hideous voices, roaring and howling rebelliously. Shrieking and groaning they rushed, or prowled forth from their hiding-places, moving about us, and flying around our heads. We had drawn our knives, and held our arms over the head and eyes; but we were done for, if not —

"Amid the terrible uproar of these monsters a shot was heard, immediately fol-

lowed by a second. The rage and roaring suddenly became suppressed and mournful, the animals bounced a few times against us, then they flew around in large circles, and the crying and roaring decreased gradually. Our lights were extinguished—we stood in the darkest night. ‘Old man, for Heaven’s sake!’ ‘Are you alive yet?’ said he, laughing with such a strange voice that I felt uneasy—and your friend? Did ’nt I tell you, that we are not alone? They defend themselves too, these beasts, if they are attacked in their holes. A single shot is sufficient to bring the whole lot upon you; but they can be quieted again, if they see that there is no fun about it. Two shots after each other, right among them, seldom fail to teach them that they are only unreasonable, noisy brutes.’

“And saying this, the old man very deliberately struck a light, and lit one of the pine-torches. ‘Lucky!’ he continued, ‘we have now a broader path before us; but march on now, it is high time. The sun is down, and we have still a good way to go. I would not advise you to remain after sunset in the Carancro swamp.’ He pushed on again, step by step, but sure and firm, with a boldness which, at each step we made, increased our confidence in him.

“Thus we might have walked for half an hour, when we saw a pale light glittering toward us. ‘Five minutes more and we will be out of this. But take care—by the edges of this cursed Spanish cypress swamp, these fiendish alligators and snapping-turtles like best to live—they like the solid land, these alligators.’

“In my anxiety to reach the solid ground, I had not paid attention to the words of the old man. The trees were lying closer here, and I had passed him. Suddenly I felt the tree, on which I had set my foot, give way. I had only time enough to cry ‘halt!’ and I was up to the arms in this bottomless mire. ‘Ah! did you want to go your own way, with your French frivolousness?’ said the old man, jumping forward with a laugh, and taking me by the hair. ‘Let this be a warning, monshur;’ and with these words he drew me up on the tree again. ‘Do you see?’ he said, and really my eyes saw several alligators, which had hurried toward me. I was unable to utter a word. The old man took out the whisky-bottle, and presenting it to me, said: ‘Take a draught to refresh yourself—but no; wait till we are in the palmettos. So: hold! collect yourself—let that palpitation of heart pass. So! my good Frencher. Ah! if you make a few more such tours with old Na-

than, I tell you, you’ll be altogether another man.’

“We had now arrived at the end of the swamp. The moonshining night showed us a waving palmetto field, the millions of trees saluting us, as with waving wands. We all breathed more freely, and felt much relieved.

“Now repose and take a horn—a moderate drink at first; you may let another stronger one follow. Repose, good monshur; I see something can be made of you. We’ll betake ourselves for half an hour to the salt-lick.’ ‘Whither?’ we inquired. ‘To the salt-lick. I think we might hunt up a deer or two.’ ‘And we shall stay here?’ ‘Don’t be afraid. You have got your guns; if a bear comes, or a cougar, you know what you’ve got to do. As I said, we will see if we can’t find a deer.’ ‘But why did you not take a deer at the bayou?’ ‘Why not at the bayou?’ he interrupted, impatiently—‘on the bayou take advantage of the dead-fright of a poor deer, like the cowardly Spaniards, or wild, bloodthirsty Acadiens? May my father’s son be shot, if he ever would do so mean a trick! Halloo! what’s that?’ ‘Tis thunder.’ ‘What! thunder? You have not heard much thunder in Louisiana yet, or you would not mistake the sharp rifle of an American backwoodsman for thunder. Ah! it is James’s rifle; he has shot a deer. Halloo! a second!’

“It was really a second report, which came like the mighty roar of thunder from the magnificent forest toward the palmettos. ‘Halloo! boys! that’s enough; spare the game and your powder and lead—spare both. We must inform them that we still stick in our skins, and not in the jaws of an alligator,’ said the old man; who had, meanwhile, loaded and discharged his rifle. The sound rolled solemnly over, and came slowly back again. We sat in silence, until the old man pointed toward the palmetto, beckoned us to get up, and took his way through the field. His motions were swift and easy, like those of an eel, as he moved through the millions of stems; we followed as best we could. In half an hour we were at the salt-lick, where we found his two sons, occupied with hulking and cutting up the deer, in which they did not stop at all, so that a quarter of an hour might have passed, without our hearing a sound from them. We had sat down. When the hind and fore-quarters, and the saddle, were dissected in a sportsman-like manner, they looked inquiringly at the old man. ‘What do you think?’ he asked; ‘will you try a mouthful here, or wait un-

til we get home?" "How far is it?" "Well, how far?—with a good Mexican trotter, we might be home in three-quarters of an hour, if the ways were better; as it is, it may take us a couple of hours." "Then we prefer taking something here." "Well, be it so."

"The sons, without exchanging a word, cut off a ham from one of the deer. We picked up some dry wood, and in one minute we had a cheerful bivouac fire. In the second minute, the wooden spear was turning; and in half an hour we sat around our roasted venison, which, though eaten without bread, tasted better, we thought, than the most delicious *perdrix* filled with truffles, at the table of the restaurateur, at Versailles."

The Count stopped; for at this moment the tones of the piano-forte sounded from the dining saloon. Louise, Julie, and Genevieve put their heads through the folding doors. We all rose.

"Enough for to-day," said the count, smiling, with a bow.

"We all thank you, for the pleasure which——"

"Ah!" said the count, shrugging his shoulders, and bowing again. Then taking the hand of mamma, he entered the dancing saloon.

CHAPTER X.

THE INTERMEZZO.

WE all rose to follow the count, except Vergennes and D'Ermonvalle, who remained at their seats, without doubt to criticise; for their faces seemed broad and judge-like. Vergennes did not leave us long in doubt—he broke out:

"And what does all this prove against the colored people?"

"Nothing yet, that's true," replied D'Ermonvalle; "but we are not at the end yet."

"Pah! the end!"

"Yes, at the end—just the end," said Monteville, who returned to the debating; "it is the end which——"

"Crowns the work," said Vergennes, laughing in the caustic-cynic manner of *le jeune France*.

"But it is a pity that we did not hear this precious end! I know already what it will bring forth: it will bring, as a close and an instructive moral, rewarded virtue, and punished vice."

"Perhaps it will bring more still," interrupted Monteville, with important mien and elevated voice, but which changed

somewhat ere he could proceed. The man had, it appeared, permitted the champagne to flow a little too freely. "Perhaps it will bring more," he repeated; "perhaps it will show whither lawless passions will lead."

"We need no colored ghost, to be informed of that," said Vergennes, mocking.

Monteville, at this, turned as red as a fighting-cock; he raised his voice to a higher pitch, and the discussion threatened to become again passionate; but just at this moment, the quick introduction to the polonaise, which began the ball, sounded through the folding doors.

"*En avant, messieurs!*" trumpeted Las-salle, who, with the staff of office in his hands, played the master of ceremonies.

"Go ahead! or you have lost your French dancing-master's glory for ever," cried Doughby.

This finally put them in motion, and by means of a *pirouette* the Frenchmen are in the saloon.

"*Ma foi! donc! ah! joie!*" was heard from the mouths of the Frenchmen. They were evidently surprised—and well they might be. I doubt whether they could, except perhaps in their so-called divine Paris—certainly they could not in any other part of France, in their compagnes, as they call them—collect such a delicious wreath of beautiful ladies. 'Superb forms! transcendant toilets!' to use Doughby's expression. A threefold splendor, a treble range of figures, which could not be painted more beautiful. We had received strong additions from the neighborhood, ripe and ripening fruit, and some in bloom, in the literal and figurative sense of the words. The branches of the lemon, and orange, and catalpas, which fell through the blinds, played so beautifully around the *coiffures*. Yes: in the art of arranging a ball, these Creoles are masters. They, alone, understand it, even here in these our United States. We also give balls, and turn around, and hop occasionally, and tire ourselves; but it is a studied, mechanical affair, which comes neither from the heart, nor from the feet; and which, if I may be permitted to say so, always reminds me of the tread-mill. We are not created for such pastime—hardly for a race, although that will do better; for there we can unite our politics, and our presidential and legislative elections, our canals and turnpikes, and so forth, with the pastime; but wherever we cannot introduce these subjects, there is something wanting—for they stick to us, and hang to our feet like lead; and our ladies from very modesty, or, if I may

speak more freely, a hapless prudery, would almost require to be touched with tongs of ivory. But what a difference between them and the Creoles! The ball!—oh! the ball! All their imagination, all their amiable passions—and they are well provided with both—all, all are now united in the one great idea—*Ball!*—concentrated in it as in a focus. Sugar and cotton crops, rice and corn, tobacco and negroes, all are forgotten—the ball alone stands, like a lighthouse, before their raving, waving, boisterous senses.

In this fondness of enjoyment, their muscles swell perceptibly, their limbs become rebellious; arms, hips, feet, all tremble with excitement. Whoever saw our Creoles only at a ball, might easily conceive an equivocal—and, to their honor be it said, a wrong impression of them. It is a beautiful thing, such a Creole ball!

The pairs are ordered; the impatience, the dear impatience, can hardly be restrained any longer. The polonnaise is too slow for them—they really float through the saloon. A momentary pause, and the music changes into the quicker step of the softly floating *allemande*. Flashing glances play over their features, increasing to rapturous and intoxicating delight, as the music finally rises into the storming gallopade. How that rushes, waves, leaps, winds, tears, and is torn upon the wings of the tempest of pleasure and passion!

"Louise, this is a delicious, refreshing drink!"

"Merely a drop," she said, laughing, and drawing a heavy breath—"a mere drop," she repeats, and puts her hand to her high-beating bosom.

"We must not take too many of these drops, dear Louise, you know."

"Never fear; besides, the cotillon comes now. Do you know," she whispered secretly in my ear, "papa has made the arrangement that we shall dance to-day only *allemandes*, and gallopades; and cotillons—to cool off."

"A very wise arrangement! But why cotillons to cool off?"

"Because the ball lasts only three hours," she said, with a very mysterious mien, fanning herself with her hand, the other still resting on her wildly-beating bosom.

"You'll dance the next cotillon?" she inquired, after awhile.

"If you wish me."

"And the *allemande* and gallopade?"

"The latter, not so willingly; I hold this dance to be anything but decent. The *allemande* may do."

"Anything but decent?" she remon-

strates—"what are you thinking of, George! This dance—do you know that the Duchess de Berri—"

"If the old Duchess d'Angouleme should dance it, who is said to be the quintessence of ugly virtue, it would not make it decent, in my eyes."

"The old Duchess d'Angouleme, to dance the gallopade!" laughed Louise; "you are a wicked scoffer; but how can you be judging so morally and coldly, who are yourself so good a dancer?" she added again, coaxingly.

"That I can dance, you have to thank my New-York tours, and a certain Arthurine, now Mistress Moreland, who gave me the last polish."

"Moreland!" interrupted a voice behind me—it was Meurdon's—"I had almost forgotten that Mr. Moreland, captain and proprietor of the Providence packet, was at my house, and sends his compliments and congratulations for your change of station. He was about coming up to you, to sling his hammock for a few days, but his time did not permit."

"How! has Captain Moreland been with you, and not visited me? What! has the old boy gone to salt-water again, after having for four years watched his cabin at Bowling Green? Tell me!"

Meurdon whispered an *eh* and a *donc* into my ears, and made a most ominous and satirical grimace.

"I understand. Louise, the old fellow Moreland, of whom I have told you, and who, with his five hundred thousand dollars, cut me out with the seventeen-years-old Arthurine, is at sea again. As it seems, his honey-moon did not last long. Ah! that fatal *surplus* of thirty-three years is a heavy debt to be cancelled between fifty and seventeen!"

But the music commences for the cotillon, and we must form a circle. Louise hears no more—all her senses are directed to the cotillon; and, truly, one has to take care, with such dancers as our Creoles, and Louise *par eminence*.

"Excellent! George," she whispers to me, during the second tour—"excellent!" She is in a sea of delight—the good child.

"And so, again an *allemande*?"

Louise smiles: "I told you, that papa—"

Off we go again to the *allemande*, and into the raving, hopping gallopade. A whole quarter of an hour elapsed, in which hearing, speech, and sight were denied to me. Heaven be praised! finally there is an armistice.

"Louise, you are really tired?"

"Only warm, George—only a little warm; and that is now over. You must take a little pineapple-ice. I——"

"Heaven forbid, Louise! Not for the world! What! you, the inveterate diet-lecturer! *you* to think of pineapple-ice!"

"Well, I give it up, if you promise me——"

"Anything, except pineapple-ice."

"Then you'll dance the next cotillon, and allemande, and gallopade?"

"Oh, you rogue!" But she laughs. "Louise, that will not do; we cannot be together all the evening: it looks too cockney-like."

"But, George, we have not danced a step together since our marriage. Well, if you don't want me, I'll take, as an exchange, Papa Vignerolles for the cotillon."

"That is right; you take the sixty years old Vignerolles, and I the fifty years old Madame Houston."

"Ah, you laugh George. I assure you Papa Vignerolles is not so very disagreeable. One finds good taste in him, at least." and Louise laughs so roguishly.

We sit down on a sofa, tired and heated, and I cast my eyes over the waving, gliding, lovely night-sylphs. The toilet of some is already a little deranged—crushed flowers, rebellious curls, which have escaped from their places, become visible. And as I am examining thus, my glance falls upon a figure I had not before remarked. A tint so uncommonly white and tender—really milk and blood, to use an old simile; nut-brown eyes—a real charm in these eyes; brown hair; the toilet very tasteful, simple, and still rich; a brilliant string of pearls circling the more brilliant neck. Who may this be? Demoiselle Genevieve bends over to her as she sits in the window corner, seeming solitary and lost, while a melancholy smile plays around the lovely lips.

"Tell me, Louise, who is that splendid girl?"

"Whom do you mean?" asks Louise, whose eye, however, is fixed on the unknown.

"You have just looked at her; she sits in the last corner-window, under the orange-baldachin, and half hid in the folds of the silk curtains. Now she is arranging the curls of Genevieve."

Louise looks: says neither yes nor no, but becomes more attentive.

"She has her hair divided flat on her forehead," I recommenced; "the knot tied *à la Grecque*. She shall be my next partner."

"You have good eyes, George," laughs

Louise: "but you must not dance with her."

"But who is she, and why not?"

Louise looks again at her, but soon her eye takes another direction.

"The finest tint I ever saw," is heard in a recess of a window, just behind us. It is Vergennes's voice. Louise tosses her head involuntarily. I must laugh heartily. Oh! woman! woman! She has certainly a *tint* which you don't see every day with us.

"I challenge you to distinguish the pearls on her neck," continued Vergennes, tolerably loud, to D'Ermonville. Louise throws her head up again, but quicker; she sneers, and at the same time pouts her lower lip, as if sulking: I affected not to remark this.

"What a neck!" rejoins a second voice—"what a bust!" it is D'Ermonville, who lets his enthusiasm become loud.

"*La jeune France* might better move a house, or rather a window farther off, to continue his critical perorations; had he not, Louise?" Some little silent demon has come over her.

"You are right boys!" interrupted Doughby, laughing; who, it may be remarked, *en passant*, is no bad cotillon dancer, and even dances the allemande well. Where might he have learned it? Yet in merry old Kentuck, such a thing may be learned. "You're right, boys," he continued, "it is a splendid craft; and one might ship for life with her. New and sound, slender rigged, magnificent spars, soft swelling bows, lovely breast-work and figure-head—no mistake from stem to stern."

Louise lifts her head for a third time, and throws a reproachful glance at her brother-in-law, which he does not observe.

"But who is this young lady?" I inquired for a tenth time.

Doughby continues: "She arrived with two ladies, an old and a young one, just as I entered the court. Vergennes, you should try your fortune, she has heard nothing of your negro philosophy. With her you may stand a chance—with our ladies you have spoiled all."

"I spoiled all?" asks Vergennes, astonished.

"So I tell you, and you will soon feel its truth. I tell you, this negro-philanthropy is a ticklish thing—a sensual thing; for sensuality is generally at the foundation, I'll bet ten to one. Our ladies have a kind of instinct, and with them, he who takes the side of the blacks openly, is suspected secretly—do you understand?"

But we 'll be still, this is not the place for this kind o' talk."

And Vergennes looks thoughtfully at Doughby, for a moment; but in the next, he impatiently passes one hand through his curls, with the other he twists his mustaches, and after having done so begins to move. Louise has hardly heard his step, which is very light; but as she sees him, she jumps up and cries after him, almost in an offended tone: "Vergennes! Vergennes! You will not, without the master of ceremonies——"

"Let him alone, Louise! the poor boy has already received half-a-dozen sacks for his negro-mania, and I do n't see why the master of ceremonies should be wanted."

"But it is customary; and what will Charles——" Louise stops; the word Charles had escaped from her lips.

"Charles?" I inquired, astonished. "Again something new. What has Charles to say in the matter?"

"What has Charles to say about it?" rejoins Louise, somewhat embarrassed. She gazes at the unknown, and impatiently follows Vergennes, who passes twice round the saloon, in smart, graceful nonchalance—tries here to be amiable, there spends a word, gradually falls into a lighter *pas*, and finally floats toward the beautiful hermit, as if borne on the wings of a butterfly. Louise's features become more attentive. For one moment her eye is fixed on the daring cousin, then it wanders through the saloon, and rests on the middle window-corner. And there is Charles! I had not seen him all the evening. Where was he? Did he dance? Not that I saw.

"Where was Charles?" I asked, aloud.

Louise neither sees nor hears me; she bends forward as if she would listen across the whole saloon, and alternately looks at the beautiful hermit and Charles. And Charles stands motionless as a monument, his eye fixed on Vergennes. At last he gives a sign of life: his upper lip curls, his eyes roll, he changes color and begins to tremble.

"Louise," I exclaimed, "what is it? tell me! Charles stands as if prepared for a leap; fury speaks from every feature. What has he against Vergennes trying his fortune with the unknown! Only look how his eyes roll in their sockets—how he bends forward, just like our backwoodsmen, or French fencing-masters, when they meditate a pass."

The poor Vergennes, it appears, has to return again with a refusal. Neither mustache or imperial seemed to make any im-

pression—she looks, she hears coolly, and he takes great pains, it is evident; his attitude is so invoking, his whole appearance shows that he tries hard.

"She shakes her head," whispers Louise triumphantly. "She has refused:" she whispers louder, with a malice of which I did not think her capable.

"It is really so. Vergennes retreats, biting his lips; but I cannot understand yet, why you take such interest in the misfortune of our hot-headed nephew."

"See, Charles appears as if covered with blood."

"This is really strange! Tell me, what means this manœuvre, or intrigue, for, it has a strong appearance of the latter. He seems interested for the young lady."

"Very natural!" replied Louise.

"Very natural? What has this unknown to do with Charles? He behaves more like a jealous husband than a lover, and forgets, altogether, that Miss Emily War——"

"I hear my name, although only half spoken out," laughs the beautiful young lady, who herself stands before me. I lift my eyes, look at her, and then at Louise, around whose lips a laughing, satisfactory smile plays. The sweet girl promenades on the arm of Count Vignerolles, and fixes occasionally her lorgnon—to give to her features a curious, indolent smile—her looks resting confidently on Vignerolles. And his so lovingly on her. This look, this mien! What is it? What does it all mean? I look at both, and look again. Louise's face seems to be inclined to laughing.

"Mr. Howard!" whispered Miss Warren. "You look around so terribly serious, and mystical."

"Not that, Miss Warren, but somewhat astonished. We live in strange times."

"Yes, really strange," she laughs, lifting her lorgnon, and looking at Charles, with the most innocent air in the world. At this moment the music recommences.

"Papa Vignerolles!" laughs Louise, "I have chosen you for this cotillon, instead of my lazy George, provided that——"

"And my god-child receives a refusal," rejoins Vignerolles.

"There, you see, George, to speak thus to a lady and god-child. Papa is altogether degenerated."

"But Louise, in all earnest, I should desire that you would not dance this set. You know——" And Louise pouts her pretty lip—who can refuse now? "Well,

Louise, your pleasure is mine, only I pray you—

While I am making the bargain, D'Ermonville comes with the *maître de ceremonies* to Louise, and she gracefully promises him three sets. During this conversation, the magnet in the window has also, happily, attracted Charles. The intrigue seems to be conducted at a higher place. *Monsieur le maître des ceremonies* is d'accord avec le cher papa. These Creoles really cannot live without intrigue; it has become their necessity, which they let their own children play, as they have no other actors. But to what will the whole of this lead? We will examine these two people a little closer. They begin to attract attention. The old cavaliers, particularly the count, cast watchful glances at them. Look at the papa. His hawk's eye rests on the cooing couple—it follows all their motions—while a peculiar, satirical, contented smile enlivens his somewhat dried profile. Charles, at last, has taken his position by the side of the fair unknown. And she is so humble, and gentle, and modest! She is really exceedingly beautiful. A swan-like neck, like fresh fallen snow; and such a face, such hands, and feet; I never saw a more perfect *toute ensemble*. The boy certainly has taste. But Emily Warren, and Mrs. Houston! I don't like this changing between lovers, even if it were only at a ball. This inconstancy, at all events, is no good omen for a happy domestic life. I must hear what important affair the two persons have to arrange. She plucks the orange and convolvulus flowers, as if she made chaspie for the poor wounded Charles. He—but at last he speaks.

"You do not dance, then, dear Eleanor?"

"Not for the last three years," she replies, with a nightingale voice, and with a sigh which could have softened a stone, and which evidently pierces Charles through marrow and bone.

"Horrible!" he replies, shuddering, and forcing me to laugh involuntarily.

Again a pause. Charles says something which must sound touching, for she throws a melting look at him, and he averts his eyes; then lifts them bashfully, and looks so imploringly at her, and she at him, and both blush. The affair becomes interesting, for it begins to steer to a point, although it may seem very annoying to the uninitiated, to the quaker, or the Yankee. Let us give another turn to their ideas, it can do no harm.

As I step up, about to invite the beauty *ex abrupte* to a dance, they seem instinct-

ively to have guessed my uncalled-for interference, for they get up, and Charles stammers, as if beside himself, "You make me the most happy of mortals!"

"But what will—" she says hesitatingly. The tone of her voice has something of soft malice; she looks at him with a slight ironical smile, which suits her admirably. Then her eye runs over the saloon, and finally rests on Emily. Charles becomes pale. She casts another glance at him; but the young man seems to have lost his senses completely, and stands like a condemned criminal. Tremblingly, he steps among the dancers; all eyes are fixed on the couple; but they are blind, yes, really blind—so bashful seems their first appearance. They manage, however, to do full justice to the unquestioned renown of Creole dancing. But softly! our judgment had almost become prejudice. The step of both suddenly becomes so firm, so elastic, their motions so graceful! Look, and wonder. A *metempsychose* had suddenly come over them during these ten seconds—sooner than was dreamed by Grecian philosophers. This language! Truly, it is plain enough, every step, every movement speaks. This Charles has become altogether a new man; so flexible, so passionate, as if he had studied the art of seduction from the Athenian Alcibiades. And now she receives him! with air so flattering, so resigned! And while the music—(it consists of the piano-forte, two violins, and one violoncello, which have come up from the city and is excellent)—play the last figure, all eyes are bent upon the strange couple. Emily Warren cannot avert her eyes; she seems astonished; joy, sympathy, shines from her eyes. The count follows their movements with real consolation. The young lady is abashed at her triumph—for triumph it really is—she beats Louise and Genevieve, and that is saying something. As she lifts her magical brown eyes on her enchanted partner, who gently takes her hand for the *allmande*, she is covered with glowing fire. I believe, if both should die this moment, they would have seen happiness enough!

"Papa, what do you say to this?" I inquired of my father-in-law, who was just hurrying by, as my eye glanced toward Charles. The papa gives no answer; but satisfaction, joy, shine from every feature.

"What do you mean?" he finally asks.

"Who is the young lady?"

"Which?"

"With whom Charles is dancing?"

"Don't you know her? It is Demoiselle Lacalle."

"How! Demoiselle Lacalle, the daughter of Monsieur Lacalle, of whom Count Vignerolles——"

"The same; she was not at the dinner, because she had to pay a visit to an intimate friend in the vicinity, in company with her governess."

"So, the daughter of the same Lacalle. And how does it come that Charles——"

"To-morrow morning, dear Howard. Now permit me——" And the shrewd (if he was not my father-in-law, I should say—intrigant) Creole, turns like an eel from me, to let me run upon Julie. Gracious Heavens! how does she look, now. I have always remarked in her a certain penchant for the Creole indolence, but never yet this feature. The lower lip, the whole lower jaw, hangs so angrily, and the corners of her mouth so poutingly. She looks just like a Creole of thirty, who is about ordering her negress to be whipped.

"Howard, have you seen Doughby?"

"Doughby? Yes. It is not half an hour ago, but it might be a little longer."

"He is away—gone—got on horseback, one of papa's horses, and rode away with two gentlemen."

"Compose yourself, Julie; if he rode away, he will find the way back again. Do you know what direction he took?"

"Just imagine, to leave the ball!" complains Julie, with suppressed anger—"to leave me, all, for his drunken——"

"Fie! Julie! not so hasty, my dear sister," I whispered into the ear of the offended wife. "Doughby is no drunkard, neither does he keep the company of drunkards, and you are too excited to be just; he does not deserve this of you."

"You are an American, and so don't choose to listen to the faults of Doughby, because he is your countryman."

"I am an American, Julie, thank God! But you are in bad temper. Do you know whither Doughby went?"

"Do I know?" grumbled Julie. "He was taken by two gentlemen, they say, and had only time to tell Mrs. Richards——"

Again some unlucky fatality, thought I, the good Doughby never knows the time. But see, there is Mrs. Richards!

"Mrs. Richards," I began, (the lady was just standing up for the gallopade,) "what is the matter about Mr. Doughby?"

"Nothing, nothing at all. Mr. Trumbull and Captain Blount came to take him to Alexandria, for a conference about an important and unforeseen affair; the committee is assembled there. He had hardly time to ask me to excuse him to Mrs.

Doughby, who was just dancing the allemande."

"That is just what I thought. Console yourself, sister-in-law. You see Mr. Doughby is in as good company, as any true American can desire to be; on the wrong side, perhaps, in this instance, but we live in a free country, and Old Hickory must take precedence of the ball."

"Ah! it is too bad, dear Howard," complains the mamma, who joined us also, and threatens to bring the conclave once more into action.

"Mamma, Doughby is one of the committee-men; he is a politician, and owes some duty to his party. He could not do otherwise than he has done. Don't excite yourself—he was compelled to go."

The mamma is about commencing a new attack upon poor Doughby, but, happily, the allemande changes into the gallopade, and from the *melée* of voices, rises the harmony of music. Eleanor and Charles are in front; they fly past her in a sea of delight, and Doughby is happily forgotten. But it is sincere pleasure to see these two. She trembles and blushes to the ends of her fingers. What child of sixteen would not blush and tremble at this play, and floating of bodies and limbs! At first, with a slight resistance, those lovely little feet are raised; but soon they become more lively. Charles forgets his existence, as, floating in the luxurious dance, he held her in his arms. Louise and Monteville gallop past me. "Louise!" I whisper, just as she passes, but Louise does not hear. At last I think she must be worn out.

"Louise, this is the last: promise it to me."

"The last—I'll promise it," she laughs breathlessly.

The dance is over. Louise steps near Eleanor—the two embrace; the mamma has forgotten Doughby altogether, and she comes up with a shawl, which she puts carefully over the shoulders of the lovely child. The other ladies also ask for theirs; and a general shawling ensues.

"How is this, papa; is the ball closed?"

"It has struck twelve."

"But why not one more hour, papa, dear papa?" begs Louise. "See, Eleanor has only danced a single gallopade and one poor allemande, and one wearisome cotillon, and we not more than three——"

"Five, dear child," counts papa, arithmetically on his fingers—"five! you have made a mistake; and five cotillons, allemandes, and gallopades, are more than enough for three hours. Another night will follow the next day, remember, and

you know I do n't like a ball to be rendered fatiguing. It is a great fault, Mr. Howard, of young ladies; and there is nothing more horrible, than overheated young girls, with pale or red faces, loose hanging curls, and crushed coiffure." The words of the old practitioner are directed half to me and half to Louise. He whispers to us: "Our ladies are retreating—I must look," and he runs off. Louise is about to follow.

"Stop, Louise! do not forget your shawl, the night air is cool."

"The ladies are going!"

"But not to the rooms. Wait, Louise; I'll accompany you."

"We go to mamma, to take there some refreshments. I must go with the ladies; you stay here with the gentlemen."

"But, Louise! only tell me—one feels as if betrayed and sold, in this mist of mysteries—what is the matter with Charles? what has occurred between him and Emily?"

"Charles, and Emily, and Doughby—ah! only imagine, George, Doughby! the mamma has been terribly angry."

"We are not speaking now about Doughby. He did what I also would have done, in his position."

"But mamma was very angry," laughs Louise, throwing a kiss at me, and disappearing behind her mother's door.

"This is enough to make one go crazy," I cried, angrily turning from the door, I scarce knew whither.

From the dining-saloon, loud laughing is heard, and from the negro village a similar noise. The colored people also have a kind of a ball, but not quite so *con amore*, as it appears; the belles prefer hanging to the blinds, and looking at the movements of their mistresses, in hopes to produce the same effect on the next occasion, and in the same perfection. We are now *en famille*, as they say; and intrigues are going on, which would give matter for an eight-day divertissement to the court of a German duodecimo prince. What does this old count want, who, like an aged, half-decayed cotton-tree, receives the embraces of the fresh vine? What can he mean? The whole is arranged, that is clear enough. Even Mrs. Houston's vinegar-face has become so calmly, peaceably smooth! I am anxious to know what curious piece of work this fine web will ultimately produce. In the saloon the count's voice is heard. I cannot get the old cavalier out of my head. It is not envy, for I would not exchange my lovely little wife

for ten Emilys. She is a real iceberg, this girl; and calculating too, like all the Yankees—who, as soon as they hear of a count or marquis, that has dollars—yes, I believe that is with them the main point.

"Halloo! Mr. Howard! Hamletizing?" laughs Hauterouge. "Won't you come into the saloon? The company is the gayest I have seen for a long time."

"I hear it," I replied, in a grumbling tone, but permitting the baron to draw me thither. A real bachelor-party, was there progressing in suitable style. Half-a-dozen sofas and ottomans, brought from both saloons, were put around the table, on which stood an immense bowl of champagne and pineapple punch, together with pots and cups of *chasse caffee*. All eyes were directed toward the count, who throws himself on a fauteuil, like a victor, while a smile of high satisfaction rests on his thin lips. For one moment he looks at the company collected around the table, sips his punch gravely, and asks:

"And so you wish to annoy yourselves again by listening to our adventures, messieurs?"

"You narrate so agreeably, so admirably!" said the polite Frenchmen and Creoles.

"Without compliment, then, messieurs! You are so kind as to participate; and it would be impolite not to fulfil your wishes, according to the best of my ability; only I regret, that your expectations will, perhaps, not be satisfied. But as we await some more guests, and Messieurs Doughby and Richards have left us——"

"How! Richards also, Monsieur de Vignerolles? I did not know that—I thought only my brother-in-law."

"Ah! Monsieur Doughby"—interrupts the count, laughing, "went to present us with a new President, after his own taste; and to open for himself, on this occasion, the way to *pouvoir*."

"And you believe——" asked several.

"I do not only believe—I am completely convinced that this young man, although not yet perfectly polished, but containing pure gold in his character, will, before many years, play an important part in the world. He is just the man for our present democracy; and we may be called happy, if power does not fall into worse hands. I have seldom found so much *aplomb*, as in this young man; he is just the sort of wood out of which we should cut our Secretaries of state and Presidents."

"To tell the truth, I have often the same thoughts. The good Doughby is not

bashful ; and if his daring, his ready tongue and tact——”

“But why did Richards go, Monsieur de Vignerolles ?”

“A very agreeable visitor from the north, for whose reception friend Menou has already made preparations. We shall hear more about it in a few hours.”

The good cavalier seems to know more than the son of the house. I am a little annoyed at this secrecy ; I cannot entirely hide my anger. Who could, when thus unnecessarily mystified ?

“But this is strange,” I cried ; “a visit after midnight, of which——”

“Of which,” interrupted the count, smiling, “de Vignerolles knows, and Mister de Howard is in the dark. Is it not so ?”

“Curiosity is not one of my faults, Monsieur de Vignerolles,” I said, abruptly. My lips curled involuntarily. The count examines me coolly for a moment, and then, without answer, turns to the company. “With what a supercilious and affected mien !” thought I. “Curse these Frenchmen ! they fool with their betters !”

“Let me see—where did we stop ?” he inquires, quite pleasantly, after a short pause.

“At your forest meal.”

“Ah, yes ; at our forest meal. Lassalle, do you recollect that night-scene ?—the full-moon, playing brilliantly in all the colors of the rainbow, as it threw its beautifully green and magic light over the millions of palmettos—here a cypress, rising in mild-glowing glory—there a second, a third, disappearing in a fantastic *clair obscure*—the whole landscape dancing before our enchanted gaze ; to the southwest the flame-colored and burning skies ; toward the northwest the moon-lit firmament ?—all so dim, so melting, so magically glorious ! And we grouped *à la Indienne*, squatting around the fire, with leaves of the cotton-tree spread on our knees, and upon the leaves slices of venison, which seemed sufficient for a whole regiment ; and which disappeared so quickly, that even our backwoodsmen were astonished at our terrible appetites, and looked, and stopped, and stared, in amazement !”

The count paused.

END OF PART FOUR.

PART FIVE.

THE SQUATTER CHIEF;

OR,

THE FIRST AMERICAN IN TEXAS.

CHAPTER I.

THE BLOODY BLOCKHOUSE.

AFTER a pause, he thus began :

"The life of a backwoodsman soon enchants you, more particularly if you are young, strong, and healthy, and have an eye for the beauties of primitive nature. And who can help admiring these eternal forests, that stand in such magnificent contrast to anything that can be seen in the old world—to all artificial splendor, and the mere works of man. Here, the stranger feels like a liberated bird, that has just left its cage to roam in unbounded space. A sort of trembling anxiety—an inexplicable agitation—a slight oppression at the heart, comes over the novice, when he finds himself for the first time among our western wilds. The immensity awes, while the vast variety confounds him; and he regains his self-confidence, only after he has tried his strength, and overcome dangers. The elasticity of spirit which he then experiences, is indeed a mental phenomena, which metaphysicians would find it difficult, not only to explain, but to describe. A daring consciousness of inherent power is one of the chief peculiarities of the backwoodsman's character. Nor is it strange, that a man who is in daily and hourly danger of being either choked in a swamp or drowned in a bayou—of being devoured by an alligator, or torn to pieces by a bear—should at length acquire that familiarity

with what is generally called danger, which naturally produces a change in their manners, language, and whole existence. Their phrases are original and practical; often rough and uncouth, it is true—but rarely, if ever, vulgar. Their conversation is usually embellished by figures of the strongest kind, which impart remarkable vividness to their ideas. Their manners display a recklessness, which at one moment makes your hair stand on end—and the next, produces a roar of laughter. Strange beings are these children of the west, and little understood by the civilized world. They are a vast community of separate existences—each, in a sense, independent of every other thing, except God!

"The hour which we passed with old Nathan and his companions, at our delicious forest-meal, was truly a pleasant one. We often laughed until the tears came into our eyes, for the views of these people with regard to European affairs, were sometimes so strange, so original, so perverted, and at the same time conceived with such boldness, that they reminded us of Teniers's temptation of St. Antoine. Again, their ideas concerning their own country and its internal affairs, were expressed with an exactness, which indicated soundness of judgment, and remarkable shrewdness. Now we observed that we were really in a new world—among new men, whose culture, although the elements were European, had received American formation through-

out—or rather, American nature, far different from that of the Creoles and our imported countrymen, who at this moment, to tell the truth, appeared to me like a *ragout*, reheated.

“Our new acquaintances, however, were harmless, as we had often suspected; for, while the conversation was maintained, the old man knew well, by his tact and finesse, how to discover our ideas, plans, and expectations, in a way that would have helped a commissary of police to the presidency, and in a way that an American only could have adopted with success. It may well be said, that this country wants no police. Every native is a policeman, so far as his influence extends. This is a strong and peculiar feature in our republic.

“So we had, as I have said, exchanged our opinions, and, as far as concerned ourselves, disclosed also our plans and expectations, without observing that the old man had become suddenly taciturn, and finally completely silent. He had taken up his rifle, and was hammering stronger, and stronger on the flint; a sure sign of rising distrust with backwoodsmen, as I have since been informed. The others whispered, and muttered something into each other's ears, and drew their feet further from ours. These motions finally attracted our attention, and we, also, became silent. ‘So you have received your donation?’ at length inquired the old man. ‘Yes, dear Mr. Nathan.’ ‘And the power to choose a tract of land in any part of Louisiana?’ ‘We should prefer it on the Teche; but, to speak candidly, we——’ ‘You would not care much about just taking the tract which seems to you best situated,’ interrupted the old man, hammering harder at the flint. ‘Provided, it is not already given away,’ I added. ‘How do you mean given away? I’ve a notion, you mean given away by the Spanish authorities?’ ‘Or by the previous rightful possessors of this land, the French,’ I added; ‘for these too—as far as I know, these only, had and have the right of donation according to the laws of nations.’ The man ill-humoredly shook his head. ‘And so, if a king in the Old World takes it into his head, to send over here some lackey with a dirty flag, with orders to plant this flag on any half decayed cotton-tree he chooses to select; you think, in all earnest, that this twittle-twattle gives him the right to claim, for himself, some hundred thousand square miles; and to give it away and divide it, as it pleases him, or his satellites?’ ‘If the king, or his government, have really taken possession of the land, by an act

which you call twittle-twattle—that is, if they have also founded towns, settlements, and forts; then I should think yes,’ I replied, firmly.

“The changed and arrogant language of the backwoodsman did not please us,” remarked the count, “and we thought we should neglect our rights as Frenchmen, as well as the honor of our own and the Spanish nation, if we should not even here repel these assumptions. The old man looked with his most piercing glance at me, and then at Lassalle. ‘Nobody doubts,’ he replied, more moderately, ‘that towns and forts give a right of possession; nobody will dispute your right to New-Orleans and the two banks of the stream, up to Baton Rouge and Point Coupé; but will you assert that your king has a right to dispose of lands upon which neither he nor his have ever set foot?’ ‘If they are within the limits of his forts and settlements, yes; if not, no.’ ‘You are short,’ said the old man, who, during this dispute, had stood up, pushing the breech of his rifle hard upon the ground—‘very short; and you might as well, perhaps, get my land marked out for you, as a donation. But I have a notion there is a difference between having land picked out for you, and wishing to drive honest people off their own property; and, in fact, actually and positively doing so.’ ‘What are you about, old man? Who thought of having your land given as a donation?’ ‘You are a Frenchman, man—you have a quick tongue—and so had the baron who called himself Bostropp; but do n’t try to follow in his footsteps.’ ‘What did Baron Bostropp do?’ ‘What did he do? I’ll tell you what he did. He procured a donation from the government of about fifteen thousand acres, which reached up to the Arkansas. But he had not enough with these lands, although they were the finest that can exist. There was an Acadien on his frontier, named Jean. Well, the Acadien had, with hard labor, laid out his plantation, and with his wife and children, had kept it in good order. One day this rascally baron comes, sees the plantation, and immediately puts his machine at New-Orleans in motion—and the poor John must go, must return again to the wilderness, and give up his plantation to the baron—who was about executing, Heaven knows what—some grand notion with this plantation. Two years afterward, the adventurer’s career was finished; he had to fly the land in night and darkness. But poor Jean had lost his plantation. Now the buildings lie in ruins, and opossums and

bears inhabit them. If I had been Jean, I would have given the baron a bullet instead of the plantation.'

"As he concluded, the old man raised his rifle, as if ready to shoot. 'As to the baron, I cannot and will not undertake his defence,' I said, without seeming to notice the movement. 'If the case is as you say, he has acted very foolishly and wrong.' I stopped, for the old man was going—but he turned and listened with his head thrown back. The assumption of the backwoodsman was the more disagreeable to us, as we were still in the habit of looking on Louisiana as a French colony, and our lawful property. The old man stood thoughtfully silent, while his sons, throwing the legs and saddles of venison, with the axes, on their shoulders, prepared themselves for marching. We yet stood still. 'Do you not want to go with us?' inquired the old man. 'We do not know whether you would like it——' 'Words are not arrows, man. There are good and bad men among every people. Come on, for here you would not fare very well.' Saying this, they commenced their march, and we followed.

"The way, or rather the direction in which we proceeded—for of a way or path there was no trace—was across a prairie, thence through a forest, then we came upon a thicket, which ruined what fragments of wardrobe we had still upon us. Now we came into waving land, from the rolling heights of which we could plainly see the prairie fire. The cristering of the reeds, the crackling of branches, and falling of trees, came plainly on our ears at every gust of wind. But we had become somewhat accustomed to these startlings.

"We might have walked several miles, through thick and thin, when the soil became soft, and the indications of a near swamp could be seen. We went as far as the ground would carry us, and finally stopped at the edge of the swamp. James and Joe threw their burdens down without saying a word, took to their axes, and began to cut into one of the nearest cypress-trees. Lassalle and myself stood silent, awaiting the development of events, and admiring the extraordinary ease with which these backwoodsmen severed the massive trunks. It seemed more like play than labor. The axes fell upon the trees so regularly, in such perfect time, that it reminded us of the harmony of the threshing flails in the villages on the Rhine, which we had passed in the corps of Condé. In less than five minutes, the tree, which was four or five feet in diameter, trembled,

creaked, and crashed into the swamp. As soon as the cypress had fallen, the two young wood-cutters sprang upon the trunk, walked forward on it and cut off the branches, except those at the very top, so that we could see the tree lying in the bog, but mostly on the surface. Then they felled a second, a third, and fourth—and in half an hour, the four backwoodsmen had, in silence and with ease, done a work, which would have taken four Frenchmen at the least, a whole day.

"We had looked on with astonishment, and now inquired what this work was for? 'You'll soon see,' replied the old man, who leaned on his rifle and stared silently out upon the swamp; he was awoke from his reveries by the voice of James, who cried 'Ready!' 'Now come, Frenchers,' said the old man. 'But why across the swamp? and why this hard labor?' we inquired. 'Because this is the nearest way; and your bones would be more fatigued, if we should go around the swamp. Hard labor!' he grumbled, with a contemptuous glance at the cypress-trees—'if you call that hard labor, then you have not worked much yet, and should have remained in your own country, where, as I hear, there are millions of fools, who work all their lives for others. I have a notion that you are one of the aristocrats, who like to have other people work for them, and prefer sitting down in the ready-made nest. We are no Jeans, we—by jingo! no! We are not the people to be driven out of our property by a baron, though he should bring a hundred and fifty to back him in the undertaking.'

"The old man was evidently possessed by the idea, that we had come like Bostrop, first to inspect his plantation, and then to drive him and his family from it. This was quite clear to us, and although inclined to dispel this mistaken fancy, the arrogant, rough behavior, which he had so suddenly assumed, and the adventure, the night-march, the dangers we had passed, which had already given us something of the backwoodsman's defiance, not to mention the venison and several draughts of whisky, determined us to risk all consequences, and mystify the old man. 'We'll see then,' said we, after a backwoodsman's pause, and with an *insouciance* which would have done honor to a forty years' old bushman. And with a firm step we followed the old man, who walked before us. Having arrived at the top of the tree, on which the branches were left, as I have remarked, to prevent the trunk from sinking in, we walked over the branches to the second

tree; from thence to a third, and thence to the fourth. Before we had arrived at the end of this one, we were already on solid ground. The old man ordered us to follow him in the previous order, that is, in a so-called Indian file; and we groped, one after the other, for about half a mile through thick bushes. Finally, Nathan stopped, and putting his rifle to the ground, he turned round and examined us with owl's eyes. 'Where are we?' I asked, putting my double-barrelled gun to the ground also, and imitating his posture. The man looked at me, and his face changed to a peculiar smile. 'In Louisiana, certainly: between the Red River, the Gulf of Mexico and the Mississippi—with in the limits which your king has drawn; yet still at a place where his arm was found too short, although the arms of kings are said to be very long.'

"The voice in which this was spoken, had a piercing, scornful sound, so that my glance involuntarily fell upon the speaker, to ascertain if possible, by his looks, what were his intentions. His face was as apathetic as ever. Taking my arm, he led me a few steps aside, and pointed to a dark mass which greatly resembled a clay wall. 'Perhaps one of the Indian tombs?' I said, in an off-handed manner. 'Ay, it is a fact—you have guessed it; a tomb it is, although not of the red skins; but of a man—better than whom, none ever travelled down the endless river. But you still might be right with the red skins. I have a notion it was once what they call an Indian mound. Won't you come in?' We stepped nearer, and saw palisades, and behind these a roof of logs, projected about ten feet over the former. 'What do you say now?' 'The whole seems to be more intended as a spot of defence, than as a 'secure abode.' 'Above we shall find pine-torches,' said the old man. 'Now wait till the ladder comes—then you will see the rest.' A ladder was now let down, on which we went up the steep clay wall; one of the young men opened a door in the palisades, and we beheld the interior of this strange structure.

"It was tolerably strong, built of immense cypress-trees, which could well resist twenty-four pounders. The whole formed a square, with a low roof, formed also of trees. It might have been forty feet in length, and as many in width. In the interior, nothing was seen but a chimney of unburned brick and stones; and as we stepped along, we saw a wooden tablet, which was erected in one corner of the blockhouse. 'Don't step upon that hill,' said the man, solemnly; 'it is holy ground.'

'Holy ground?' we inquired. 'Holy ground, man! Beneath that tablet lies one, as honest a backwoodsman as ever floated down the Mississippi.' 'So this is a tomb,' we said, not a little affected. 'A tomb, man; his tomb—his blockhouse, which he built, which he defended, in which he fell, and which was moistened by his blood—which he baptized with blood when it was scarcely built. You shall hear more of this bloody blockhouse; you shall hear how six American rifles resisted fifty-eight Spanish and French muskets.' We shook our heads incredulously. He took both of us by the arm, and led us from the building through the stockade. When arrived at a projection of about six feet square, he stopped. 'Resisted eighty-five French and Spanish muskets!' he repeated, in a firm voice. 'It was Asa, with his three brethren; his brother-in-law, and cousin, and their wives. He fell like a man, like a true backwoodsman, like a brave American; but first he dispatched five-and-thirty Spaniards. There,' he continued, pointing to a dark clump of cotton-trees, in the moonlit crowns of which, the spirits of the fallen really seemed to move—'there! beneath yon cotton-trees—beneath their shadows they fought, and fell, and are buried!'

"The silence of the night—the gorgeous moon, which made the forest adjoining the prairie appear as if bathed in waves of glory—the dark wilderness on both sides of the block-house, wrapped in deep shadows—all these circumstances, united with the behavior of the old man, which had become so solemn, so grandly natural, affected strongly our senses, and we stood without replying by a single word.

"'Yes,' he repeated, leaning on his rifle, 'here fell thirty-five Spaniards, beneath the rifle of one American.' 'And the name of this American?' 'Why do you ask his name?—why do you ask for names, as if you were after horse-thieves? Moreover, you ask too much. Look with your eyes, hear with your ears, but keep your tongue quiet, for the trees have ears here, as walls are said to have in your country.' 'Pardon: we did not mean to offend you,' I replied. 'No offence,' replied the old man with a scornful smile, 'I calculate you did not; I calculate I should like to see him who should intend to offend or injure old Nathan, or to throw anything in his way. I would soon cool his appetite for him, old Nathan would—as long as he has his rifle and dagger within arms-length. It is a fact; so, as I say it is. The man who built this block-house—and look well at it, for it has been but little

changed, except the roof, which was the cause of his death—lies now buried on his own ground. He was the pride of backwoodsmen—but the Spaniards had to pay a high price for his death. They have lost the desire again to attack Asa's settlement. Ay, they will not so soon forget Asa Nollins—'Asa Nollins?' I interrupted; 'it appears to me that I have heard of this man'—nor the lesson which he gave to them,' he continued, without noticing my words. 'So you heard about Asa? and what did you hear?' he asked, turning darkly to me.

"I had bethought myself, during the short pause; for we had both remarked that the temperament of our new acquaintance was a very ticklish one. 'I could not tell you exactly,' I replied, turning off. 'I recollect having heard the name of the man; but we have heard, and been obliged to hear so much, that we forget half of all these stories—' 'Understand,' rejoined the old man—'I have the notion that you do not want to come out with your words; perhaps it is just as well—at all events, more prudent. I tell you, if you look into the cotton-forest from this place, it will appear all black to you, from the very edge; but go down and walk over those sixty paces, and you will find it light and white. You can't always trust even your eyes; all depends on the point of view from which you look at a thing.' And after this digression, the old man stopped again, looked inquiringly at us, and then slowly continued: 'I'll tell you what you have heard: that the man, whose tomb you have seen, broke into your settlement, and there stole horses. Have you not?—and that he was a bloodthirsty rebel?' 'Something like it, to tell the truth; although I do not recollect exactly.' 'And I tell you,' interrupted the old man, passionately, 'I'll be shot, if that is not the cursedest lie ever told. He has not stolen horses any more than myself, who am a regulator, and am employed by my fellow-citizens to uphold order; and as to the rebel, he was an American, and therefore could be no rebel, for he is born free!' 'Regulator?' I inquired, listening in some anxiety to this freeborn American, who could be no rebel. 'Regulator!' repeated the man, in a self-conceited voice. 'Probably you do not know what that means? It is an office which we backwoodsmen have created, where we take the law into our own hands, and do not get it measured by paid judges and lawyers, so much for a dollar. Anon, you will hear more of it, but first you shall hear about Asa and his blockhouse, which he chris-

tened *the bloody*, and which has become bloody indeed.' 'Would n't it be better to put this off till another time?' 'Till another time?' repeated the old man. 'Mark me! fools put off—wise men act; there is a time for everything, and now is the time to speak of Asa, for you come now into his settlement, and you shall hear before you see—to-morrow is no time for it.'

"The man's language became more uncomfortable to us; his morose malice sometimes shot like flakes of lightning, pregnant with mischief, through his verbosity; and although we did not yet repent having intrusted ourselves to the somewhat dangerous roughness of this backwood character, we began to think that less advance from our side would not have been superfluous. But without betraying any displeasure, we took our positions in a way which showed our willingness to hear the story of the renowned Asa."

"Monsieur de Vignerolles," remarks Meurdon, yawning, "you so excellently comprehend the manner and nature of our backwoodsmen."

"Your sketches are so lively," brawled a second, puffing away the smoke of his Havana cigar.

"They may well be so," replies the count, laughing, and sipping at his glass. "If one is in the claws of these curious people, they take care that these impressions are not soon effaced."

"I am really anxious to hear the history of this Lacalle; although this digression seems about to tax our patience somewhat. But the relation is so interesting, and, for a Frenchman, he narrates so faithfully, and appears so enchanted with backwoodsmen, that he hardly takes time to moisten his throat."

CHAPTER II

AFTER a pause of a minute, he continues:

"Did you ever make the Mississippi-leap?" suddenly inquired the old man. 'What do you mean by the Mississippi-leap?' we rejoined. 'A thousand miles from the mouth of the Ohio down to the Red River.' 'No; but I have made the trip up from New-Orleans.' 'That's nothing,' replied Nathan; 'the stream there is not one-tenth part as dangerous as it is above Natchez; and it is too deep to bring the sandbanks, snags, sawyers, and whatever the name of all those curses may be, at every step between your feet. But, understand me—above Natchez, before the

Atchafalaya and Lafourche, and Plaquemine, and bayou Sara, and twenty other bayous, have tapped off the Mississippi, and he spreads, at the time of the floods, over about twenty-five miles, on both sides, where you see not a foot of land, but only trees; and where, if you do not see them, you must calculate where the real stream runs—if you travel then on a flat-boat, for four or six weeks, on this muddiest, sweetest, almightiest of all waters—and if every hour sawyers, planters, snakes, wood-islands, and whatever else these satans may be called, are upon you, and you fly past them, as a trotter runs twenty knots an hour past mile-stones—and every one of these infernal mile-stones threaten to bury you a hundred feet deep in the almighty deluge—then, I'll be shot, if you won't be glad to enter at last some quiet stream; say the Arkansas or the Red River.'

"You see," interrupts the count, "our backwoodsman becomes verbose; for he begins to talk of the Mississippi—a theme inexhaustible for him, as it is inexhaustible in itself. The best that we can do, is to listen patiently, in the consoling expectation that the thread of his web, as he chooses to call his sketch, will suddenly unravel, and so waste itself to an end."

"Bravo! Vignerolles! Excellently well!" cry the Creoles and Frenchmen.

The count nodded silence: "Messieurs, let the old man speak, for Heaven's sake! or we shall not finish before to-morrow noon."

"'You lose all idea of limits,' he continued, 'at the sight of the almighty Mississippi; you almost forget yourself, and can only thank your God, when he brings you finally into quiet water. Well, this mercy he showed to us—me and Asa. We first wanted to get into the Arkansas, but we were drawn off, and felt thankful that we could reach about a hundred miles farther, below the mouth of Red River. It was high time, I tell you, the Mississippi was full, though beginning to fall a little, and we arrived in our ark at the mouth of the Red River. But this ark was so ruined and leaky that it drew water like a pipe—there was scarcely a dry spot in it; and we were standing, men and women, in the water up to the knees—the children, and a couple of little pigs, which we had with us, squealed and cried like mad. It was a miserable life, Heaven knows! Well, it was, I said, high time for us to look around for dry land; but for many miles; there was none to be seen, and we could not risk going into the middle of the stream with our boat, for I've a notion

it would have been torn to pieces mighty quick. We, therefore, kept close above the mouth of Red River in the Mississippi. A few hundred trees had floated together, and piled up in that quarter, and there we stopped.

"Well, we stopped, although it was an unsafe harbor; for, though the trees were so magnificently long and thick, they rocked to and fro—kind o' see-sawed, like old women in their kangaroo chairs. But there was no other chance, and Asa cried out, 'Halloo, Nathan! this is the place, I've a notion; the flood falls, and we will refresh ourselves here, and await low water, and dry ourselves; otherwise our clothes will rot on our bodies—and be quick with the cases, and the boys, and the notions; they must all come out, and the sooner the better.' So Asa cried, and you ought only to have seen us then. For miles around all was water, and we throwing boxes, and cases, and notions out upon the rocking island, or bank—for it consisted only of trees floated together, thrown and piled up there by the stream which had driven us to them. As we stepped on one stem, it rolled down with us; a second did not do much better, and there was a real confusion, as if the devil had hid himself among the thousand stems. Asa had jumped out first, and proceeded across the trees. All at once, he cries. 'Halloo! good luck, Nathan!—I say, good luck! we are not alone here; we have other guests. Fetch the notions and boxes on shore; the women may dry themselves, and we'll go out hunting.' 'Asa,' says I, 'you dream; out a hunting! Not alligators?' 'Not alligators,' cries Asa—'not alligators, Nathan—but squatters, as good as you have ever seen them in Ohio: squatters, I tell you, and the best squatters you ever saw.' As we heard that, off we ran to see the squatters, and caught about five hundred of them in less than half an hour; for they were so tame, poor things, that they could be caught like little kittens. But they were squirrels—these squatters—who had saved themselves on the trees from the flood. And they were so lean, that it needed a pretty large quantity of them to make a dinner for ten hungry stomachs; but it was a real godsend, although we had much trouble to fix up our cooking-apparatus, I tell you.

"Moreover, our whole harbor, on this cursed wood-island, was one for which we would not have given a fiddle-stick, if we could only have got a single square foot of dry land. We could not lie, or stand, or sit, on account of the eternal dodging

of the trees in the gulf. If we climbed upon a higher one, the chances were two to one that the lower logs gave way, and down we would roll into the water along with them. As for being drowned, we had nothing to fear, for there were plenty of alligators around us, and from the expression of their eyes, we could see that they would not permit us to reach the bottom. So we were pretty busy with taking care of our precious selves, skinning and cooking the squatters, holding our dear wives, that they might not fall into the water, and pushing off the alligators, who were a-laying and a-shooting around us like cats; but for all this we held out for about four hours. No help came, and finally Asa got angry. "We must get away from this cursed wooden-island," said he; "we must go to some place where our soles will stand on solid ground, though the place be not bigger than the wheel of a wheelbarrow. We must away, else we shall wake to-morrow morning and find ourselves in the belly of an alligator. They are very hungry, and not at all particular—the mean devils."

"Now this was a fact; and we had no alternative but to go into the stream with our leaking and half-burst flat-boat, which was nearly filled with water. Well, we might just as well have tried to go to the moon. The stream would have torn the boat like spider's web. But Asa knew how to help himself; he had discovered a small channel right through the wood-island, and to this we now directed our course. We had first to push away with our poles some fifty trees, and to work harder than niggers; yet in spite of this dog-like labor, we seemed not to have bettered ourselves much, for we had hardly proceeded half a mile when the sun went down, and a raven-dark night set in. But one thing we had gained; we were in the Red River, which, in comparison with the Mississippi, is a very nice little stream, although Satan might drink of it. So we lighted our lantern, and hoisted it upon a pole, and rowed and worked for five miles more, until finally we could feel land and grapple it with our hook. The moment we reached it, we jumped from the boat, and threw out our notions and cases and boxes; our men picked up dry-wood for fire, and to keep the musquitos, alligators, wolves, bears, and other brutes, at the necessary distance. Asa tore a load of tillandsea from the trees with the hook, and in half an hour we slept like rats. Slept, I say!—In all my life I never slept so well.

"On the next day, our women dried their clothes and notions, and we baled the boat, drew it on shore, and fixed it up as well as we could. This took us three days, and when we had done, we again took to the water. We travelled up the Red River, to where the Black River falls into it on the right. Arrived there, we still proceeded upward, into a bayou, and through it, in a southern direction. The bayou was pretty long, and we were tired and hungry—for our flour barrels showed the bottom, our meat was gone, and a few dozen mackerels, with a tub of corn, was all the eatables that we had left; but we had seven gallons of 'consolation' left, and that kept our heart and kidneys warm."

"Consolation! what kind of filth is that?" inquired Lassalle.

"Why, consolation—western-stomach-consolation, you may well call it, especially if it is real Monongahela," replied the old man, whom I did not like to interrupt any more, for fear this eternal sketch would never come to an end. 'Well,' he continued, 'at last we found a place where we could land, and on solid ground, although it was half cypress swamp. But we were familiar with swamps, and for a backwoodsman, such a cypress swamp is not a very bad thing. You have always your soft bed, and can find tillandsea, which saves your mattresses. Well, we brought our notions and all on shore, and fixed up a hut of branches, at some distance from the swamp, in which hut we lodged our women. Tillandsea, as I remarked, was in abundance. It was the second night, in eight weeks, that we and our women had slept in quiet.

"The next morning we got up at an early hour. There were two things which lay heavily at our hearts. The first was, to procure provisions for ten months; the second, to find out a tract of land, on which an honest squatter might settle without fear of being taken as a luncheon by an alligator, or being shown a house further on, by the sheriff. We were tired of this travelling with wives and children, and saw that nothing could be gained by it. 'A rolling stone,' says old Benjamin Franklin, 'never gathers moss;' we knew this, and also that it was high time, (for it was in August, and our flour, bacon, and mackerel were at an end,) to look out for laying in fresh provisions. So we took our axes and rifles, and divided into two parties—one was led by Asa, the other by myself—and we went, he in a western, and I in a southern direction. Two of the men remained with the women; for we found the

traces of more panthers, than you would find of cows and horses in old Virginy. I had pressed forward in a southern direction. When I tell you I pressed forward, you must not imagine a pleasure excursion, such as you made with us—but in fact, a real driving through the bushes, into cypress swamps, in which there were more snapping-turtles than musquitoes, honey-locusts, and bear-trees, and ivy, and thorns without number or measure, enough to tear you to pieces without knife or axe—besides which, you were sure of a dozen of congo and moccason snakes about your feet in place of shoe-strings.

“Well, man,” the old fellow continued: “we marched deeper and deeper into the forest—shot two bears, which we hulked—and Righteous, my brother-in-law, and one of Asa’s brothers, shot a wild turkey, which we plucked and cleaned immediately, and roasted on a spear. We had a few handfulls of corn in our pouch, and a calabash of “consolation,” which tasted excellent at our meal. After having refreshed ourselves, body and soul, we buried a part of our bear booty. The best pieces, with the fat, Righteous loaded on his shoulders, and returned with them to the women. We then pushed further into the wilderness. I had a compass along with me, and intended to inspect the country, and if possible find out a place on which an honest squatter might settle, and plant his roll of Virginia chewing tobacco. On the fourth day of our fatiguing march we came to an upland, or, as we call it, a rolling prairie, from which I could look all around. My heart leaped with joy. It was an excellent tract of fine land, as the growth of live-oaks, honey-locusts, and catalpas in the background proved. Before you stretched the prairie, about ten miles from west to south; to the right was a cotton-tree forest, and in the rear another. This latter forest was the same as you now see before your eyes. Everything was here united to form, at least, a hundred of the finest plantations you could imagine; tobacco, cotton, even sugar-land—and above all, excellent water! Our hearts leaped within us for joy, as you may well believe. I jumped about on this hill, like a child of ten years old, thinking over in my mind where our houses could best be fixed; and so calculated for the whole day around the country, looked at everything, and in my calculations, came to this clay wall, or Indian mound, which lies just half a mile off. I looked at this lump of earth, and speculated on what it might have served for, and what notion

the people might have had to do with it, when they cut it out so; and as I calculated, it struck me that the red skins might have used it for a fort, for the forest was cut out for sixty paces around—and so I thought we might use it for the same purpose, in case of necessity. I inspected the country closer—came to the swamp, and calculated that this swamp, although I am not fond of swamps, was a most glorious swamp, and that the Creoles and Frenchers don’t like water—and as I calculated so, a fine deer come running past me, which in ten seconds had ceased to be a deer, I promise you. I look at this as a good omen, for the deer had actually run into my way, and so I had earned my meal honestly. Well, I went at the deer, skinned him, cut him up, and roasted a piece, which was to last me for some days, and then I lay down.

“On the next day I returned, after wrapping and hanging up the rest of the deer, so that the turkey-buzzards could not steal or hurt it, and on the way home, I shot a bear, of which I took the best part along, and buried the rest. After six days, I happily arrived again at the bayou. And says I to Asa, “Asa, I’ve got it—I’ve found it—just what we want! I’ve got the notion there is not a piece of land in all the old states, as fine as I can show you in four days’ walk.” “I have seen something also,” says Asa, “but don’t exactly like what I saw,” says he. “Pine-woods, with light, sandy grounds, and prairies with black lettes and palmettos, but no wood on it—not enough to build a corn-crib.” “I’ve found what we want, man,” says I; “found all we want, and more than we want, and enough for our grand-children too!” “But is the land free?—Have you looked? No carvings on the trees—no axe-cut?” “Neither carving nor axe-cut to be seen, as far as your feet carry you; an Indian mound with bushes around it—that’s all. I’ve a notion that no man’s foot was on the place for the last thirty years.” “But the Creoles?” says Asa. “Do you know whether the Creoles—perhaps it is woodland owned by a Creole?” “There is a swamp, and that the Creoles have not traversed. Come, Asa, you’ll see for yourself. You know I’m not blind in such cases; there’s a swamp, and a fine swamp too, across which no Creole risks himself.” “Well,” says Asa, “I know that you can distinguish walnut from chestnut bottom, and we might just as well build our hut a house further off. Bears and deer are plenty here—we have already shot seven bears, and half-a-dozen deer, and our wo-

men have already boiled out about a hundred pounds of bears' grease. Look at them—they look like sailors boiling whale oil in the South seas." We turned to the women, and they looked just as Asa had said. I told them what I had seen, and that we ought to settle on that land. The women deliberated with us, and we concluded to begin the removal on the next day.

"The next morning Asa and Righteous, and two out of the four women, went with me into the bush, taking on our backs all that we could carry; and in eight days, we arrived safely in the promised land. But it was a trip! I've a notion that the Israelites, during their forty years in the desert, did not endure as much, or work as hard as we did in these eight days. But, when Asa finally saw the land, and looked down from the first of the rolling hills, and then turned toward the prairie, and saw the beautiful trees, he also became rejoiced. He was not much given to rejoicings, Asa was n't: but he rejoiced, and cried: "Nathan, Heaven will bless you for this! You are a real Sunday child! Here we will live and die. I have never seen such transcendent land in all my life time." And so we got our five senses together,' continued the old man, 'and calculated where we might but build our houses, and some began to cut trees and make preparations to build a blockhouse—while I went back to get the rest of our folks.

"Well, man, it took us full three weeks more, before we could quietly lie down in our blockhouse, without fearing to receive a visit from a herd of wolves, or a brood of panthers. But in six weeks, we were all ready and done. 'Twas no fun, I assure you, by jingo! We had to build bridges and rafts, to bring our notions, and cases, and women over the bayous and swamps, and to cut paths through the forest—but with the help of our axes, we finally got through to the spot we wanted.'

"The old man stopped," remarked the count; "the recollection of the six weeks seemed to have affected him, judging by the heaving and hard breathing which issued from his gigantic breast. After a while he continued:

"Now we were under a roof, though all in one house; but the trees were already cut for two others, and the raising of them was a mere amusement; in one week both were raised, and roofs and clapboards over them. Certainly, our houses had neither doors nor windows, and before the holes where we were to come and go, blankets were hung; but richer people than us had often to do with less.

"We were, meanwhile, advanced far into the second half of October; we could not expect a harvest, even if we had had seed-corn. There was no settlement for hundreds of miles around; and, if there had been, we were in want of the silver stuff. "What is to be done, Nathan?" Asa inquired of me. "Halloo! Asa," says Rachel, my sister, "you ask what to do, when bears run about like sheep in Kentucky territory, and more deer can be seen than opossums in Virginia. Fie! for shame!" "But, Rachel," says Asa, "you know the bottoms of your two flour-barrels have been visible for some time, and we cannot always eat venison or bear-meat." "But there are persons who would willingly give one or even two barrels of flour for a deer, and a few barrels of corn for a dozen pots of bear-grease. Do n't you know that?—and do n't you know where these persons are to be found?" "You are right, Rachel," says I. "We'll go out hunting," says I to Asa, "and shoot half-a-dozen bears and a few dozen deer; for of bears and deer there is a great abundance—more than in the whole of old Virginia and Kentucky-territory." So we went out hunting, and the first day shot two bears and three deer, dressed them, and carried them home, and our women fried out the grease and dried the hams. We continued shooting, until we had a full dozen bears and several dozen of deer. After proceeding thus far, we stopped—for the gifts of God must be spared.

"While our women were cooking and frying, and drying saddles and hams of venison, and deer-skins, we went over to the bayou with our oxen, drew our old ark on shore, and made it water-proof. When it was done, we loaded it with the hams and legs of venison, bears' grease and skins, took our leave of the women, (leaving Righteous with them,) and started on our voyage after provisions. We travelled up the bayou into Red River, and down the Mississippi, which had become reasonable again; and I've a notion it was high time for us, because the whisky-barrel also began to sound hollow, and, for the last few weeks, our rations had not been more than a gill a day for each man—and where "consolation" is wanted for the stomach, there the hands do n't like to move. We had a great desire, once more, to have refreshing draughts of this "consolation," and we rowed on bravely down the Mississippi, stopping nowhere until we came to the levee at New-Orleans, where they inquired for our papers. We told them we came from the Ohio, and not from Ken-

tucky territory ; and that was true, for we did come from thence, though we should not, perhaps, have come at all, if the sheriff had not showed us a house farther off, which made us mighty angry ; and that was the cause of our going down the Mississippi into Louisiana. But this, as you will understand, we kept to ourselves. Luckily, Asa was acquainted in New-Orleans ; so he pushed a dozen bears' claws into the hands of the bald-headed harbor-master, and the old fellow closed one eye, while we sold about three hundred pounds of bears' grease, at half a dollar a pound. We sold the hams of venison and the skins as well as we could, and, with nearly three hundred dollars in our pockets, went up again toward Baton Rouge.

"We sold our boat for two dollars," added the count, laughing.

"And," continued the old man, in the same ironical tone, 'near Baton Rouge we hailed a flat-boat, which was loaded with flour, whisky and notions, going down the Mississippi. They told us there was a keel-boat behind, with which we could make a bargain. The keel-boat soon came after them, and we bought a dozen barrels of corn, and a half-dozen of flour and whisky, with several other notions. We bought the keel-boat also, the owner putting the balance of the cargo into the flat-boat. They were fellow-countrymen ; and we told them to speak with our folks on the Salt River about us, and jumped into the keel-boat just as the Spanish custom-house officers arrived ; but before they could say much, we were in the middle of the stream and out of the eyes of the rascals. But we had horrid work to get the keel-boat up the stream into the Red River—cursed work, I tell you—but finally we got in and went up to where the lye-colored waters of the Black River fall into the copper-brown Red River. We soon came into the bayou, and Asa, and James, and Bill took the first load and went up, while Jonas and I remained as watch. We had to work a full fortnight before we had the barrels, and the notions, and all in the right place. The boat we drew ashore, turned it over, and covered it with leaves and rubbish, that we might be able to use it on other occasions.'

"You are astonished," the count says, turning toward us, "that I throw such a weight upon these every-day and uninteresting details of the beginning of a backwoods settlement ; but I must assure you, that this sketch of life, although as if cut from a block by the old man, had, meanwhile, become quite interesting to us, from

more than one reason. We were in a like position, although not without means ; yet we were, in ourselves, more helpless than they. Therefore, the explanations of the old man, about his life and doings in commencing his settlement, had for us great interest, besides the charm of novelty. It was during his relation that the idea gradually settled in my mind, which, as you know, I afterward executed, to found a new settlement, far from the plantations of the Creoles. To realize this idea, which had already often occurred to me, I thought the old fellow seemed to be just the man to help me. Eye-witnesses of the incredible ease with which he and his followers had overcome obstacles, which appeared to us absolutely unconquerable, his example had already awakened in us something of the well-known adventurous American spirit. To become, with his assistance, the founder of my own plantation—and to escape, in this manner, the idle life of Creoles in the Attakapas, became now my firm resolution. I was just about making proposals to him to that effect, when Lassalle interrupted me with the question, why he did not take his provisions down from Natchitoches, by which he would have been saved the greatest part of his trouble ?

"The glance which he threw at him, was so pecuniary sharp and biting, that our friend involuntarily cast his eyes to the ground. It was a glance at the same time ironical, smiling, yet angry. For awhile he looked at Lassalle and me, and then spoke :

"'Would n't take you for my adviser, man ! I've a notion you would give me French advice, and that is not worth much. I tell you, you would not get many dollars for a whole cart load of bears' grease at Natchitoches. To take such property there, would be the same as importing porter to England, or claret to France, because they have bears themselves in abundance. And then,' he added, half laughing, 'we did not wish to discover to the French and Spanish bloodhounds that we had settled here in their vicinity, and that we brought their own bears and deer to their market.' 'Old man,' I began. He winked at me, knowingly, and continued : 'Be cunning as the serpent, is an axiom which is not to be despised, I tell you, man ; although I do not much like the cunning of the serpent. But the cunning of a dog—ah ! that's another thing. But the story.

"'So we were provided for the winter, and so we lived two families in one house. We did wish to erect the other three block-houses, so that every family could have its

own domicile ; we Americans love to have our own huts—you know our proverb, 'our house is our castle ;' but we had to think of the clearing and manuring our fields, and this was no mere trifle, for we had not a single horse-hoof—we had two ploughs and appurtenances, but the horses were wanting. Well, we cleared the fields, and Asa and I took our rifles to spy around the country, whether we could not find a pair of horses, and also cows, for we saw clearly that we could do nothing without cattle. We wanted about three cows, and we had fifty dollars left of the three hundred which we had got in New-Orleans. We travelled about fifty miles around, but found no plantation, as we hoped, to supply us. So we shot some bears and deer, and returned.

"We then manured our fields, ringed the trees, dug out the underwood, and put ten acres of cotton-wood forest in order for corn, and about six for tobacco. All was done but ploughing. And already our women and men began to pick the ground, which, of all labors, is that which the backwoodsmen like least. It spoils soul and body, to be day after day doing nothing, but just picking the ground. It is only fit work for niggers or white slaves.

"Well, we had picked in this way a few acres, and finished a piece of real nigger's work, when all at once just as we were leaving the field, we heard the tramping of horses, and soon after four men came riding up the prairie. As they saw us, they stopped, apparently in no less astonishment than we were, and talked with each other. They had a couple of strong wolf-dogs, and two pointers with them. So says Asa, "this is a magnificent opportunity to buy a pair of horses, and I'll see whether I can make a bargain." And Asa steps up to them, and bows—for Asa had served in the revolutionary war under Lafayette—and asks them if they would not alight and drop in. As Asa asks this, we take up our rifles, which were leaning against a tree—for you know backwoodsmen do not leave their rifles far from them ; they are their best friends, these rifles—friends with a steady hand and a sharp eye. But when the Creoles saw our rifles, they spurred up their horses, and seemed very much frightened. "Do n't be afraid," said Asa, "you are among peaceable people ; we have our rifles at hand against bears, wolves, and red skins—not against Christian people." These words seemed to quiet them, and they trotted toward us. We set our rifles down, and they alighted, and stepped into Asa's house. At first they

looked around, not a little astonished, as it seemed ; but Asa handed them a bottle of excellent Monongahela, after trying which, their heads seemed to become lighter. Bocher roasted a saddle of venison, or perhaps two, and we invited the hunters to dinner. They accepted the invitation ; and while eating, Asa asks them if they would not like to exchange two of their horses for bright Spanish dollars. At the mentioning of the Spanish dollars, their eyes brightened with joy—for at that time, and even now, money is a scarce article in the country—and they asked how many dollars Asa would be willing to pay for a horse. Asa says, "For the brown one which you ride"—he spoke to the leader—"twenty dollars ; for the brown one with the white foot, fifteen."

"The French then began to parley, in their own way, and at last they said that Asa should have the two horses for forty dollars. "Five and thirty," says Asa, "and not a picayune more." "Well, take them for thirty-five," replied the Spaniards or Frenchmen, which ever they were ; but I have the notion they were both, for they spoke both languages, and would have the money counted out before they would give up the horses ; but to this we would not consent. "We must first have the horses," we said, and went out. When we got outside, the first man did not want to give up the brown horse, and that made us angry ; however, they saw, finally, that we were in earnest, and then they took the money. But we saw clearly that they were not people with whom a decent man likes to trade. However, all was settled, and they returned into the room with us, to drink a bottle of taffia on the bargain, as they said. So we drank a bottle, and several others followed, till they could stand no longer, and with stammering voice they informed us that they were not very well satisfied with finding us in this vicinity, and there would be too many hunters to make the sport on land worth a cent. We told them that there would never be too many hunters—and that the sooner the bears, wolves, panthers, and deer, should disappear, the better it would be for the country ; that it was not created for hunting-grounds, but to grow cotton, sugar, and corn. That was the truth. They grumbled something among themselves, in French-Spanish jargon—and as they left us, two on each horse, they said they would soon see us again.

"When they were gone, Asa looked after them a minute, shook his head, and said—"Hark'e, men, these are what we

call Creoles—that is, a third of them Spaniards, a third French, and the rest Indian blood. They have all the mischief of the three nations; and we must look out, or they will surely bring us into some infernal scrape.” “But into what scrape should they bring us?” inquired Rachel. “That I do not know; but as sure as there are sheriffs in the old States, so sure are there plagues of some sort here, although they may have another name.” “But suppose our land is owned by nobody, and we are the first who put up a hut here?” “Then it is ours according to justice,” says Asa; “but I anticipate something. Take care—they bring us nothing good.” “Well,” says I, “Asa, if they bring no good, they will take no good, I can tell them. We can also be poisonous, Asa,” says I, “poisonous as congo snakes. I ain’t afraid of ten such treacherous Creoles—for I have seen it and heard it with my own ears, that they are shabby devils, who do not care any more about their word than a nigger up in old Kentucky. But we have the horses, and can work our fields beautifully.” “So we can,” says Asa, “and we’ll go at it right off. But these horses are still very young; I’ve a notion they are half wild yet, and not long caught from the prairies.”

“So it was, indeed. We had first to span and yoke in the horses for a few days before they would make a furrow; but they soon learned better, and then the work went on quick and smooth. We had prepared some fifteen acres for sowing corn, about ten for Virginia weed, and were about ringing a few more hundreds of cotton-trees, and digging up the bushes and ivy, to plant more corn and tobacco, when suddenly we were baulked in our designs. Asa had guessed right; the Creole varmints were upon us sooner than we had expected. We were occupied in the bush, measuring off a piece of ten acres, and making it acquainted with the axe, when Jones came running to us, and whispered: “Men, do n’t you hear anything? the redskins!” “The redskins!” we say, “what the deuce do they want? not our scalps? If they want them, they must get up early.”

“We took our rifles, which were leaning against the trees—for backwoodsmen, as you must know, dare not leave these faithful friends far off: they are like their wives, these rifles, they must always have them by their side day and night. So we took up our rifles, and went up the hill—on which, further back, our houses were built—and really saw and soon heard the gang, which consisted of some fourteen or

fifteen horsemen, who came riding toward our settlement with loud shouts and hurrahs! And says Asa, “Nathan,” says he, “these are no redskins; I’ve a notion they are the infernal Creoles, who come on with their companions. And they appear to me to be real vagabonds; they act as if they were drunk.”

“They really did act so, indeed worse, and shouted and hurrahed like fiends. When they were still about fifty paces from us, Asa stepped forward. One of the foremost of the Creoles cried out: “That’s the horse-thief! the vagabond! who has cheated me of my brown horse!” Asa gave no answer to this rough speech, but waited till they should come nearer. They soon came nearer—and one of them asked: “Who is the chief here?” Asa shakes his head and replies: “There is no chief—here are citizens, and they are all alike.” The man then said: “You have stolen a horse from this gentleman, Monsieur Croupier; you must return it.” “Is that all?” says Asa. “Not all!” replied the man. “Furthermore, you have to show who gave you the right to hunt in this country.” “Most probably the same who has given it to you,” said Asa to the man, who looked impudently at him.

“The Creoles were quite astonished at this answer, and some of them cried “We have our hunting rights and our donations from his excellency the governor,” and others, “from his majesty, the great King of France and Navarre.” “And will not allow strangers to injure us by hunting on our grounds,” cried all; “bears become more scarce, and also cougars and deer—the buffaloes are gone altogether!” and the Creoles jumped about on their horses, as if they were crazy. Asa replied boldly, “the sooner the bears, wolves and cougars are dispatched, the better it is for the land. The country was not meant for bears and wolves, but for men.” But the Creoles said, we had no right to be hunting here, and that we should clear out. Asa inquired, what right they had to order us away, and what authority. They were somewhat perplexed at this, and muttered among themselves. Asa saw at once that they had no authority, and were no magistrates, but only a rabble of our neighbors, who came without authority, and calculated to frighten us.

“Again they inquired whether we had a right to settle here, to erect buildings, and manure fields. Asa bid them not trouble themselves too much about us or our rights; that he had settled here, with his fellow-citizens, and that he would take

care that the right to do so should not be wanted. Then they threatened to inform the commander at Natchitoches, and the syndicus, and Heaven knows who else, that we had settled here without permission; and then they said we had better look out. Asa told them they might go and inform the Old Harry of it—he did n't care; but, if they did so, he guessed they had better do it quick—for if they should rile him up, he would send them home in such a way that they might forget the road back again. Just then the Creole, whose name was Groupier, bawled out, that he wanted his horse back. Asa told him that he should have it, and the other also, if he would return him the price he gave for them—thirty-five dollars. The Creole said he had not received so much, but only fifteen dollars.

“Therefore Asa called to us, (we had been standing about thirty paces back behind the cotton-trees,) and we stepped forward before the gang with the rifles in our hands. When they saw us ready to resist in real earnest, they wavered a little, looked at each other, and retreated. But Asa quietly says—he spoke the French pretty well, for Asa had served in Lafayette's division during the revolutionary war, and afterward when Rochambeau united with Father Washington against Cornwallis—so Asa quietly says, “Gentlemen,” says he, “you have not come here understandingly; I see you have been deceived by that man, who is no better than he should be. Here stand five of my fellow-citizens—ask them about this matter, if he did not regularly sell the horses to me for thirty-five dollars; that is, twenty for the one, and fifteen for the other—if he has not been paid, as he ought to be, and if all has not been done in a proper way.” “Nonsense,” cries the Creole, “nonsense! You shall not spoil our chase here, nor build your infernal houses. You have no right to do so, and I shall inform his excellency the governor, and the commander of Natchitoches, of the whole business.” The Creoles, who seemed to become reasonable and quiet when Asa spoke, now became furious again; they shouted and gesticulated terribly, galloped forward and back again, threw their guns about like Indians, and swore horribly, that we should clear out of the country—they did not want Americans, they could hunt their game themselves, and we should go, and that immediately, or—— At this we began to get angry, and Asa told them they should clear out themselves—they were no gentlemen, but vagabonds, whom he would

whip with his cowhide, as he would whip a nigger—they should go, for if they made him mad they would repent it all the days of their life.

“He spoke quite passionately, and as he spoke, he raised his gun ready to fire, and we did the same. When the Creoles saw this, they spurred their horses and galloped away; but when they were out of the reach of our balls, about five hundred paces off, they commenced again their jargon and yelling. Fifty thousand wild geese on the Red River, or Mississippi, would have been nothing to it. Several of them also fired their rusty guns at us. We laughed heartily at the braggarts, all but Asa—he did not laugh. “Did I not say these Creoles would bring the devil upon our necks?” “The devil,” says I, “what do you call the devil, Asa? such old woman's tongues as these? They ought to be ashamed to come upon other people's land, and exhibit their tricks and jargon, and make our very women feel ashamed. To treat quiet citizens in their own houses in this way: shall we stand that?” “That would not be the worst,” says Asa. “If it was, we might quietly pocket it, and it would not tear our pockets either. But I have a notion, that these shabby rascals will tell it further; and if it comes to the ears of one of their commandants, or the governor, that we have settled in their country without ceremony—before we are one month older, a company or two of their musketeers will come, and then——” “And then, when they come, Asa—what then?” says I. “If they come on, we must meet them. Did you forget the Indian mound?” “I have not forgotten it,” says Asa, “I was just thinking of it—whether we could now build a blockhouse there, that would withstand any invasion from these rascals.” “That's all well,” says Asa, “it's all well—but whether we have the right to do so, is another question, Nathan,” says he. “I tell you that thought hurts me already day and night, since the first time that these Creoles came here, three weeks ago. And I do not want anything unjust, Nathan,” says he; “I want the right, man,” says he, “the right stands above all. If you advance with the wrong foot, all goes wrong, and you get swamped, and the swamps and alligators devour you.” “Asa,” says I, “I have thought about it already, for a long time, and have calculated, and ruminated; and I have a notion, Asa, that we did not advance with the wrong foot, but on the right way, on as right a way as can be—and that we have a lawful claim upon this country, which no sheriff in the

States can deny, and no Frenchman or Spaniard, come whence they may. We have got just claims to the land, Asa," says I. "What do you say then, Nathan?" says Asa. "Did you never hear, Asa," says I, "and don't you know," says I, "that father Mississippi has his head-quarters in our country? And is not this father Mississippi the most magnificent, allmightiest water on the whole earth, and beyond it? And does n't he, the Mississippi, take here a tract of land of sixty square miles, with trees in the bargain—there another tract, and carry them away fast as an old grumbling bear carries away a pig; and devours them just in the same way, or throws them out again, twenty or a hundred miles below?" "So he does," says Asa, "I have seen it myself—how he tore off a piece of land above Memphis, the timber on which was so large that the smallest trees would have made masts for three-deckers—tore it up—and it was just as if the end of the world had come, when that mighty piece of land broke off. It was mightily horrible to look at—that was the first time in my life, that my hair stood on end; and you know, Nathan, my hair does not easily stand on end!" "I know it well," says I; "but tell me now, Asa," says I, "is not the whole of Louisiana composed of such pieces of land?—tell me that, Asa," says I. "That I do n't know—I calculate it may be so; but do n't know; I'm not sure," says Asa. "But of this you are sure, Asa? You have often heard, and yourself saw it, that this Louisiana is nothing but Mississippi bottom—pure Mississippi bottom—the settling of the river-mire of the Mississippi—and that this mire comes from our country?" "That I know," says Asa. "And that Louisiana is composed of this river-mire—of our mire, man—American mire; to which neither Frenchmen nor Spaniards have a straw's worth of claim." "That's true," says Asa; "I've a notion they have not." "Well, man—if the powerful, muddy Mississippi takes away the land that is above, just like the bear which swallows the pig, and their land becomes so thick and dirty that he throws out the slime again, as the bear vomits out all that is bad and dirty, to whom does this refuse belong? Asa, tell me that—tell me, to whom else than the owner of the bear?—and the bear, does not he belong to the man on whose land he is found? Tell me this, Asa," says I; "and so, does not the bear, or Mississippi, belong to us?" "That's all right, so I say too," says Asa, "and I'd like to see the man who would say otherwise. I would poke my five knuckles into his side so that he

would soon sing another tune." "And if the Mississippi is ours, and devours our land, his refuse also belongs to us, and we have a just claim to it," says I; "as good a right as the Frenchers and Spaniards," says I. "But they were here before us, these Frenchers and Spaniards, Nathan," says he. "And we are later here, Asa—later; we have arrived at the eleventh hour, man—but still we'll have some of the frolic; we won't take their rights from the Frenchers or Spaniards—not a horse-shoe shall they lose—but we will not permit them to take any of our rights; we have the same right to Louisiana as the Frenchers or Spaniards, and will defend these rights, Asa," says I.

The auditory which had hitherto been tolerable quiet, at least, as quiet as Frenchmen and Creoles can be; seemed to burst awake at this backwoodsman's argument and conclusion. Their French wit was excited.

"Bravo!" says Monteville, interrupting the count, and laughing aloud.

"Bravo! bravissimo!" adds Meurdon.

"Glorious!" laughs Vignerolles.

"Glorious backwoodsmen!" cries Le-trou.

"The Mississippi rises in their country," titters D'Ermonville, "therefore, Louisiana belongs to them!—Oh! transcendent conclusion!"

"You laugh," rejoins the count, "and well you may; but I assure you, that the argument did not appear laughable to me. And you too, messieurs, will have the due respect for this conclusion, if you hear that, a few years later, when Louisiana became by purchase annexed to the United States, one of our greatest statesmen used the same argument from the tribune, and with such success, that it was afterward applied again in the case of the purchase of Florida. I assure you, the Americans have, besides the many discoveries which the world thanks them for, also the honor of having invented a new kind of conquering manifest."

"But you must allow me, Monsieur de Vignerolles, that it will be found still more rational than all your glorious French manifests," I replied, a little offended.

"How seriously you Americans immediately take a thing!" says the count, laughing. "But of that another time, I only give to you what was told to me. And, to tell the truth, when I first heard this argument from the mouth of the backwoodsman, I was disposed for anything but laughter; on the contrary, laughable as it may appear to you, I felt perfectly amazed

at the barefaced insolence with which the leather-jacket disputed our right to Louisiana—the more so, because his whole dry appearance seemed to express clearly that he was not disposed to give up the claim. I was about giving free and candid expression to my anger, but he winked at me, and continued :

“Says I, “I tell you, Asa, ’t is our river; the Mississippi rises in our country, somewhere above the falls of St. Anthony. Every year it tears up as much land as—people say, who come from the old world over the salt water—as would make a small kingdom. Therefore, the land is our land.” “But,” says Asa, “we are only six, and how can we resist hundreds?” “Six, if we put up a good stockade on the Indian mound, will count sixty. We can engage then with a hundred of these Spanish musketeers,” says I. “Asa, we now have a beautiful opportunity of obtaining a tract of transcendent land,” says I, “and if we let ourselves be driven from it,” says I, “our rifles should be broken, and corn-brooms be put in our hands instead.” At this Asa became thoughtful, and my sister Rachel says: “Asa,” says she, “I calculate that Nathan, although he is my brother, and I ought not to say such things, has spoken like a true son of his father—who would rather have been scalped ten times by the red-skins, than have given up such a large, transcendent, beautiful tract of land, which so clearly and lawfully belongs to him; and I say, Asa,” says she, “I will not return again upon that muddy, omnipotent Mississippi, that’s a fact.”

“Asa hesitated a moment, then answered: “But if a hundred Spanish muskets are coming? and I’ve a notion they will come.” “Therefore we will build a blockhouse,” says Rachel; “defend ourselves and our property there; and I say, Asa,” says she, “if our folks on the Salt River, and the Kentuck, and Cumberland, hear that the Spaniards are coming upon us, they will not let their hands rest idle!” “And,” says I, “I’ve a notion that, if the men in the western territories become aware that we have such fine land; and that the French and Spaniards put their spurs into our sides, and tyrannize over us, because we defend our rights, they will not keep away long.” “But it is far from the Red River up to Salt River, and to the Kentucky and Cumberland,” says Asa—“good fifteen hundred miles, or more. Our bones may easily bleach before they receive information, and still only serve them for knife and fork handles when they come. It is not for myself that I care. I have

seen often enough the fire-spouting mouths of cannons; and have often enough heard the reports of English muskets, to be fire-proof, at any rate—but I have a wife and children.” “Do not fear for wife and children,” says Rachel; “do not fear for wife and children, where the cause of honor and justice depends on the issue. Your wife and children would be shamed for ever, if you should fly before these mock-heroes, whose courage is only on their tongues. If they were Indians—but these fellows have not a drop of blood from the red-skins; they are so cowardly that they are worse than niggers! I tell you, Asa,” says she; “I tell you beforehand, I shall not return over the muddy, omnipotent Mississippi—I want to have nothing more to do with that rough fellow—I have had enough of him, for all the days of my life. He is an ill-mannered fellow—that’s a fact. If you want to engage with him, why you may just go; but leave me the rifle, and I will defend my block-house; and if the Spaniards scalp me, then the people on Salt River will at least say, Rachel was a true daughter of Hiram Strong, and has defended herself and children: Boone, with his wife, did not do more.”

“This gave the final stroke, and Asa was now convinced, that, with his right arm, he could lawfully defend himself against the Spaniards; and we immediately made preparations for resistance. And we were not a little tickled at the thought, that we should be the first to plant the star-spangled banner in Louisiana; and we wondered what the people on Salt River would say, when they heard that we, who had been banished from home by the sheriff, had been the first in Louisiana who raised the flag of stars and stripes.”

“After the old man had thus explained to us all the causes which led him and his companions to declare war to the Spanish government, he stopped and looked at us. We remained silent, for, to speak the truth, we knew not what to say; the apparent apathy of the old man’s manner was in such inconceivable contrast to the horror of his story. This was a moment when we expected to hear ravings of anger and defiance. If a European had told us this tale, after this fashion, we should immediately have declared him to be a madman; and even as it was, we had to take pains to listen, and could hardly trust our ears. You must imagine yourself in our position to understand our feelings.

“We were Europeans, just arrived in America; we had been familiar with scenes

of blood and horror ; we had seen a throne falling, and in its fall, shake half the world ; we had left it feebly supported in its strong convulsions. And here we stood, before a backwoodsman, who, resting upon his *quasi* rights, declared, with five of his companions, war to one of the mightiest powers of the New-World. But that which appeared strangest to us, was, that there were moments, when this attack upon the sovereign rights of a relative monarch of our lawful royal family, appeared to us Frenchmen of the old nobility, as we were, as so natural, so in course, that we even forgot our national sensitiveness, and awaited the continuation of the history with an eagerness, which, had it involved the fate of our royal family, could not have been more intense. This anxiety, this deep interest, which we feel for the position of the Americans, is a natural consequence of their most natural situation ; of their novelty, their freshness, and their original manner of thinking, acting, and even belief ; and as long as this natural freshness glances from their features, and covers the coarser traces of egoism, so long will the sympathies of noble and disinterested minds go with them."

Here the narrator paused.

CHAPTER III.

THE TALE OF THE BLOODY BLOCKHOUSE.

A BRIEF interval having elapsed, the count again commenced :

"And so having concluded to maintain our rights with all our power, and with our blood if it should become necessary, we made preparations for this defence. We cut trees, mostly young cypresses, and brought them over, and trimmed them, and then hoisted them up, just as you see—a square, forty feet long, and forty wide, in the middle of which we placed a chimney. But this was not all. Asa, who had fought at Brandywine, and had been by the side of Lafayette when he was wounded ; and afterward in the Carolinas, at Cowpens, and against Cornwallis, and who therefore had seen palisades, and experienced the advantage which they give, when a dozen or even half-a-dozen of good riflemen stand behind them, made us cut palisades and sharpen them, and dig holes into the mound, run them in, and connect them with branches, so that they could not easily be torn out again. After we had finished the blockhouse, we erected,

as I have said, the stockade—and after we had done that, we covered our blockhouse with clapboards. We made the clapboards from the black pine, which Jonas and Righteous cut half a mile hence, and split them, and brought them here on their shoulders. This was a great mistake, for black pine burns like punk, when it has been dried in the air for a few days ; but we had no time to take harder wood. We had only six or seven foot thick cypress-trees, and they cannot easily be split—so we had to take to the infernal black pine, which brought us into great trouble, as you will hear at the right time.

"So we had erected the blockhouse, got the rafters over it, covered them with the clapboards, and nailed and hammered the whole together. We also fixed the chimney, so that our women were able to cook in case of need ; we filled the whisky and flour-barrels with water, brought our tools, hams, ploughs, flour and corn, and all our notions into the blockhouse, and were occupied almost day and night in fixing everything, without thinking the cursed clapboards of black pine would bring such a mischief upon us.

"We calculated that the Spanish musketeers could not come before a month or two, for we knew pretty near the amount of the garrison at Fort Natchitoches, which was about two hundred men ; and the commandant could not send all of these against us, we calculated ; and before he could get reinforcements from Fort Mississippi, at least eight weeks must elapse. This was highly consolatory to us ; for if the Spaniards had come in four weeks, our blockhouse would not have been ready ; and with six rifles, if they are ever so good, it is a hard thing to fight against sixty—that we were aware of. A good rifle is a glorious thing, in a firm hand, and with a sharp eye ; but still it cannot kill a hundred at one blow, like the ass's jaw-bone in the Bible. So we hurried to have our blockhouse ready, which was the principal thing, and to sharpen and set the palisades, all, as Asa wanted to have it ; and we put up all, as you see it here, five paces from the blockhouse, so that there was a space between, where we could move freely. The palisades had to be taken first, before they could do anything to the blockhouse. This took us the whole of four weeks.

"At last the blockhouse and palisades were done, and our women took the provisions which we had bought in Baton Rouge, with all our other notions, ploughs and all, into the blockhouse—leaving only the most necessary articles in the houses ;

and all up, we felt much easier and merrier at the thought that our blockhouse was now in order, and we in a position to resist. Asa, however, remained gloomy—he often looked at the blockhouse and said: “I’ve a notion it will become a bloody blockhouse in a short time, mind I tell you so,” says he. “I’ve a notion that some one will find a bloody tomb in it, and who that one is I know best.” Says I, “Silence, Asa! What kind of notions are these? Wherefore should you make us heavy-hearted? We want light hearts, Asa.” Asa appeared to become calm, and went quietly to his work, which had been interrupted; but as we did not use our horses always, we alternately patrolled for about ten miles around, to see whether the uninvited guests had yet come to visit us. We watched by night, also; two staid up and relieved each other; thus keeping a continual patrol.

“One morning when we were working in the bush, at ringing trees, Righteous comes galloping up. “They come!” he cries, “at least a hundred of them!” “Now it goes,” says Asa, as quickly as if he was aiming his gun at a deer—“now it goes. Are they far off?” “They are just coming up the prairie; in half an hour they may be here,” says Righteous. “How do they come? *Avant-garde? Arreir-garde?* How strong may they be?” “They march in one mass. There may be about a hundred of them,” says Righteous. “Then the game is ours; they do n’t understand military tactics—do n’t know anything at bush warfare—they are *Braddockians*,” says Asa. “Now away with you, women, away!” cries Asa, “drop everything, and away; we follow and cover your retreat; two will be in advance, to see if they do not find out our ambush.” Righteous galloped immediately to the blockhouse, just as he was, to be there before the enemy in case they should know it; but there was no danger—they thought no more of the blockhouse than our wild turkeys would. Our women took all the trifles along which had been left—it was not much—for backwoodsmen, you know, do not like to carry whole ship-loads of useless things about them. But we took all that was there, and marched off, keeping ourselves close to the edge of the forest, and creeping stealthily toward our fort, in which Righteous was already. He had opened the secret door and let down the ladder. We went up the ladder, after having driven our horses toward the swamp, and shackled their feet, that they might not run away. Then we drew the ladder up

after us, fastened the door, and there we were.

“We felt somewhat strange when we found ourselves so inclosed by the palisades, and only saw what was doing on the outside through small holes, just large enough to put your rifle through. We were almost frightened, not being accustomed to confinement. We became silent, dead silent—and minute after minute passed while hardly a whisper was heard. Rachel cut up shirts, put grease on the strips, and made plenty of bullet patches, while we put fresh flints in our rifles, fixed them all ready, and sharpened our axes and knives—all in silence.

“In this way, a long hour had passed, and now we heard noises and cries, and also musket shots—and finally we saw the Spanish musketeers through the cracks; they were running about the hill where our houses were built. Suddenly we all turned pale. A column of smoke rose—then a second—then a third. “God have mercy on us!” says Rachel; “the villains are burning down our houses!”

“We all trembled with rage! Suppose the case your own: suppose you have for four or five months labored harder than a brute, and have built a house for yourself and your wife and the poor little ones she has given you, then comes an infernal fiend and burns it down, like stubble in a corn-field—then if your teeth do not grind, and your hands clench hard together, you have no human nature. And our teeth ground, I tell you; but we were silent—fury would not let us speak. Rachel sighed: “Oh, our house! our poor house! what has our poor house done to these villains? Oh! the cowardly, treacherous wretches!” “Silence, woman!” says Asa; “silence! this is no time for lamentation; perhaps we will soon have done lamenting.” “The Lord’s will be done!” says Rachel—she is a child of pious parents—Rachel reads her Bible, and this she soon took out; but, says Asa, “It’s no time now for praying, willingly as I generally do so, but it is time to act—leave that, Rachel.” Rachel put the Bible away again, and we looked to see whether all was in order. We rested on our rifles, and stared at our burning houses. As we stared so, it suddenly comes toward us, all black and blue, from between those two forest ends.

“And with this,” observed the count, “the old man pointed to the perspective, which opened in the rays of the moon, like a gulf between two capes, into the prairie.

“The Spaniards came running up, about

a hundred strong,' continued Nathan. 'It was noon; we counted them—but could not at first find out the real number, for they ran to and fro like wild pigeons, and hardly in better order; they must have thought very little of us, otherwise they would have fixed themselves different. When they were about five hundred paces from us, they formed into something like a file, and we counted eighty-two men with muskets and carabines, and three with swords in their hands. These three were on horseback, but they now alighted. And there were seven more who had also come on horseback, and who also alighted. Among them we recognized three of the treacherous Creoles, who had brought us into this dilemma, and the one they called Groupier. The six others were so-called Acadiens, or Canadians—with whose countrymen we had already been acquainted, on the Upper Mississippi. They are excellent hunters, these Acadiens, but savage, riotous, drunken barbarians. I've a notion, that these Acadiens were the ones who first showed the Spanish musketeers the way to our blockhouse—for the Spaniards behaved so foolish that I've a notion they would have been brawling about for some hours, like white night-owls in the open day, before they would have found out what had become of us. Finally they came, the Acadiens first, as I suspected. They raised a loud cry when they saw the blockhouse and the stockade, and stood amazed, when they found that we were prepared to meet them. After a moment, they drew back to the main force. Without doubt they reported to the officers, who listened to them, shook their heads, and then the whole troop immediately set in motion. "Now look out!" whispered Asa to me. And on they came, in all kinds of colors—blue, and white, and brown, each one dirtier than the other. They marched now in better order, the captains in front, and the Acadiens at the flanks; but they kept nearer the cotton-trees, behind which they soon disappeared.

"When Asa saw this, he whispered to me, that these were the most dangerous, on account of their well-practiced hand and sharp eye—"Keep a good look out for these," says he. The others did not understand anything of bush-warfare, he said; with them he would soon have done. The Spaniards soon appeared within about a hundred paces of the blockhouse, and just within shooting distance. "Shall we shoot at the incendiaries?" says Righteous. "God forbid!" says Asa, "that does not become us. We will defend ourselves

like men; but wait until they attack us—then their blood comes upon their own heads; and, if we fall, we fall in the struggle for our lives and the lives of our wives, and our memory will stand upon the right foundation."

"When the Spaniards had approached within a hundred paces of the blockhouse, and saw that they had first to take the palisades, to get at us, they stopped, and the officers spoke together. "Hold!" just then Asa cried out to them. The captain answered, "*Messieurs les Américains!*" "What is it?" said Asa, through a crack of the palisades. The captain then stuck a dirty handkerchief upon the point of his sword, and spoke laughingly to his officers. Then he advanced about twenty steps, followed by his men. Asa again cries from the stockade, "Hold! that's not the custom of war. The officer may come to talk, but as soon as his men approach, we fire."

"You must know the Spaniards, who understand little of fighting behind walls or trees, stood all in one lump. They could not have thought much of our rifles, or else had the notion that we would not dare to defend our own lives, or they would have been wiser, and have done as the Acadiens did, who kept themselves behind the large cotton-trees. The Acadiens called to the captain to retreat into the forest, but he shook his head contemptuously. But when he heard Asa cry out again, that he should stop or that we would shoot, he seemed to get a little frightened. We saw it, and thought perhaps he had a notion that our balls would not miss him. He bawled, "Stop! do not shoot until I have spoken with you." "Be quick, then," Asa answered; "if you want to make a declaration, you ought to have done it before the commencement of hostilities, according to the laws of war, and not have burned down our houses like incendiaries."

"As Asa spoke this, three shots after each other came from the forest. 'Twas the Creoles, who, although they could not see Asa, I've a notion saw one of his buttons or his rifle shine through the cracks, so aimed in that direction and fired. The two traitors jumped quickly behind the trees, to listen if they should not hear a lamenting. But Righteous and me saw them stretch their traitorous heads forward, and we shot at the same moment; in the next they staggered and fell, never to rise again. These were the two Creoles with whom we had made the horse-trade—one of them, the traitor who called himself

Grouper. When the Spanish musketeers heard the reports—for they could not see for the projection of the forest—the officer ran back, head over heels, and cried: “March to the attack!” The Spaniards jumped and ran like madmen, thirty paces forward, and, just as if they believed us to be wild geese, whom they could frighten with the mere report of their guns, they fired their muskets upon the blockhouse. “Now is the time!” said Asa, “we can’t have a better. Have you reloaded, Nathan and Righteous? I take the captain—you, Nathan, the lieutenant—Righteous, the third officer—James, the sergeant. Understand now, and do n’t let two be firing at the same man. We must not spend our bullets for nothing.” The Spaniards were still sixty paces distant; but we were sure of our aim at a hundred and sixty, if they had been squirrels. We fired, and every shot took its man—the captain, the lieutenant, the third officer, the sergeant, and another man were hit, and laid flat enough. A complete confusion followed among the eighty musketeers, or as many as they might have been. One part ran here—and another there. Most of them ran toward the forest; but a dozen or more stopped and took up their captain and officers, to see whether there was still life in them. But we were not idle, and without waiting for Asa, who whispered to us to load again, we had our balls in the rifles, and fired. Another half-dozen fell, and the rest of them that remained left the dead lying just where they had fallen, and ran off as if their shoe-soles were burning.

“We cleaned our rifles as quick as we could, well knowing that we should not have time for it afterward—and that one missing shot might ruin all. We loaded again, and began to calculate what the musketeers would do first. Their officers had fallen; but of the Acadiens there were five alive still, and these were to be dreaded most. The turkey-buzzards were already collecting. By hundreds they came flying around the fallen.

“As we stood thus on the look-out, spying from all sides toward the forest, Righteous, who has a very sharp eye, winks to me, and points down there to the forest, where the low bushes commence. I winked to Asa, who had just loaded; and we look, and as we look we see the vermin creeping and winding through the bushes, trying to come to the east corner of the forest. We plainly saw that two Acadiens were foremost, and about twenty musketeers or more behind them. “Nathan,” says Asa, “and you, Righteous, take the Acadiens—

we take the Spaniards just as they come, one after the other.” We took them so, and fired, and the two Acadiens and four Spaniards fell—but one of the Acadiens, who crept behind a Spaniard, and who we had overlooked, jumped up and cried: “Follow me! quick, follow me!—they have fired—before they can load again we are in the forest. This blockhouse shall be ours yet!” The Acadien started off, and the Spaniards after him; and before we had loaded they were in the forest. We were furious when we saw that the Acadien had escaped us.

“We soon remarked that three Acadiens, or Creoles, were still left. They now took the command of the Spaniards, who had convinced themselves that their officers did not understand anything of bush warfare; and so our position was not much better than when all of them were together—they were about ten to each one of us. But we had not lost courage, not at all; we only had a hard game to play, because we had to divide our attention and our force, and this enemy was more cunning than the one we had got rid of. Pretty soon we had all our hands full; and it was high time to keep our eyes open, for whenever one of us was seen at a crack—and the balls had torn splinters from the palisades and made holes—two or three shots were immediately fired; besides, the enemy now kept behind the trees. We had occasional opportunities of firing our rifles, and then four or five musketeers had to come down; but we became wearied with waiting. And mark, now—the Spaniards had divided to both sides of the forest, and were shouting across it, but we did not care for that. Suddenly they gave a loud hurrah. They had taken infernal tow to load their muskets, and one of the wads had taken fire. We did not remark it immediately, but it soon began to kindle and crack, among the cursed black pine clapboards on the roof. When the Spaniards saw this, they gave three hurrahs, and then became quiet again. We looked up to the roof and could see the flames already breaking through; and as they worked their way, we could hear the Spaniards cry more and more, louder and louder. Then says Asa, “This must be stopped, or we shall be roasted like venison. One of us must go up through the chimney with a bucket of water; I’ll go up myself——” “No, I’ll go up, Asa,” says Righteous. “You stay here; one is as good as the other. I’ll go up and extinguish the fire,” replied Asa.

“Now,” said the old man, pointing to the blockhouse, “you see it empty; but at

that time it was filled with us, and our effects and notions. Asa takes a table and places a chair upon it, and Rachel hands him a pail of water. He draws himself up by the hooks which we had fastened into the chimney, and upon which we had hung our venison-hams, and draws the bucket after him. The Spaniards became more furious, and their crying louder. It was, indeed, high time to stop the fire. Asa had drawn up the bucket, and pours the water out; and Righteous says: "More to the left, Asa—to the left; the flame is strongest there." "Confound that left; I can't see it," replied Asa; "but hand me another bucket of water." We reached him a second bucket, and Asa stretches his head out of the chimney, to see where the fire was strongest. He pours the water over it; but at the same moment we heard the report of a dozen guns. The Spaniards had seen him! "Hold!" cried Asa, with a voice altogether changed—"hold! I've got it! Let them cry and jump—the satans!"

"And at the same moment, with a tumbling noise, down came hams and saddles from the chimney, and after them Asa fell, covered with his own blood. "Asa! for Heaven's sake! Asa!—you are shot!" cried Rachel. "Silence, woman! silence!" said Asa; "I've enough for all the days of my life, which will not be many. Defend yourselves, boys; and do n't two of you shoot at the same man; do n't waste the balls—you will have to use them." "Asa! my dearest, best Asa! you dead! Then I don't want to live—I will follow you!" cried Rachel. "Silence! foolish woman! You forget that one Asa remains, and that you carry a second one under your heart. Silence! I say! Do you hear the Spaniards? Defend yourselves, boys, and protect my wife and child. Nathan will be in their father's place. Promise me this!"

"But we had not a moment's time to promise this to the dying Asa, or to shake his hand, for the Spaniards—who must have guessed what had happened—had jumped upon our stockade like mad fiends. About twenty of them came from one side of the forest, and thirty from the other. "Silence!" I cried—"Silence! You, Righteous, come here to me—and Rachel, now you can show that you are Hiram Strong's daughter and Asa's wife—you load Asa's rifle, as soon as I shoot." "Oh! my Asa!" cried Rachel—"oh! my Asa! he is dying. The hell-hounds have shot him!"

"She clung frantically to the body of her husband, and he could not get her off.

I was quite angry at it; but the enemy did not give us time to be angry. A troop of them, headed by one of the Acadiens, and armed with guns and axes, came up on the side where I stood. I shot the Acadien down; but another, the sixth and last but one, sprung into his place. "Rachel, now the rifle! the rifle, Rachel, for Heaven's sake, the rifle! One ball might now be worth as much as the blockhouse and all our lives!" I cried. But no Rachel was there; and the Acadien and the musketeers, who, at the interruption of the firing, thought that we either had not loaded, or had shot away our munition, jumped toward us, laughing like hell's fiends; and one lifting the other, half-a-dozen of them crept up the hill, with their axes, headed by the Acadien, who cut bravely into the palisades and the netting. If there had been three like this Acadien, we would have been done for there and then; for on the other side was another dozen, with the seventh infernal Acadien, and therefore hope of escape was hardly possible. But the Spaniards either wanted the strong arm, or fate was against them. Although they struck hard at the stockade, their cuts were mere children's blows; but just as Righteous had again loaded, and shot down a Spaniard, the Acadien tore out the palisade—how, I know not, to this day; there must have been a branch sticking outside. He tore it right out, lifted it like a shield, and dashed it against me. It threw me back; I staggered from the entrance, and in he jumped. Now I thought we were lost indeed. Righteous gave the Spaniard that followed, a blow on the head with his rifle; the next he stabbed with his knife—but this Acadien was man enough to bring us all to the devil. Now falls the shot—the Acadien staggers; in the next moment my boy, Godsend, came running with Asa's rifle. He had picked it up, when he saw that Rachel did not do it; he picked it up, he loaded it, and the glorious boy shot down the Acadien! I took to the axe, and that once in hand, I jumped toward the Spaniards, and dashed it into them with my right hand, plunging the knife all the while with my left. 'T was a real butchering for about a quarter of an hour, or more. At that the Spaniards lost courage; they would have lost it before, had they known that the Acadien had fallen; but now they defended themselves because their dander was up, and they had to protect their own skins. In their embarrassment, they did not well know how to come down from the palisade. Finally, they all sprang

down the hill, and ran—that is, those who could run—and we had rest on this side the blockhouse. Righteous and I set in the palisade again; and said I to my boy, “Keep a sharp eye upon the Spaniards, Godsend.” Then I ran to the other side, where the struggle was fierce and desperate.

“There were three of our men, and the women, who helped with spears, and pokers, and axes. The Spaniards had struck through the palisades with their bayonets, and wounded several, and they bled like wounded steers; but Rachel had recovered from her grief about Asa, and she and the other women tore the bayonets and guns from the hands of the Spaniards, through the palisades. As they tear to and fro, the palisades give way so much, that some of these Spaniards, these olive-green Dons, are pushed in by those behind them. We just came up, when they took their sabres, instead of their guns, to finish us the quicker. They are very industrious in their *coup de main*, these Spaniards. One of them sprang at me, and without my knife I had been lost, for there was no room to raise the axe; but I first gave him a good blow with my fist; which almost threw him to the ground, then plunged the knife into his body. I then jumped forward, took one of the muskets from Rachel’s hand, and turned it—the butt of the Spanish gun is heavier than our rifles, and I was loath to use my rifle, lest I should break it—so I clutched the musket and dealt blows upon the heads of the Spaniards, to the right and to the left. I told the women they should go into the blockhouse, and not be in our way—that they might load the rifles, for that we must first have the Acadien, for he was the last one. So Godsend loaded my rifle, and the women the others; and as we fight thus in the blockade, our brave women—our glorious women! stand like soldiers in the blockhouse, and shoot into the Spaniards. Three or four fell; and happily for us, the Acadien among them. When the musketeers saw this, they were just like dogs—these infernal Spaniards, who can only attack when they have a leader to command them—they jumped down with a *Dioz*, and *Carracco*, and *Maleditor Gajor*! and off they ran, as if a petard had fallen among them.”

“The old man stopped, and drew a deep breath, for he had become uncommonly warm during the sketch of these last scenes. After he had breathed a moment, he continued:

“Yes, this half or whole hour, whatever it might have been, was short and

long—short to tell and to see, but dearly long for me, I tell you. It is no fun, to have to defend yourself against a hundred of Spanish varmints, to save, not only your own skin, but the lives of your families and dear children. We were so dog, and dead-tired, that we fell down just like chased oxen and calves, without minding the blood, which ran as thick as if it had rained blood since the morning. Seventeen Spaniards and two Acadiens, dead and dying, lay within the stockade. We were bleeding still; all of us being either slightly or badly wounded. I had several stabs—others had shots, which, although not dangerous, were pretty deep. We fell down on all sides, and in all directions, like wounded buffaloes, who seek a hiding-place, to breathe out their lives. If the Spaniards had attacked us then, we should have been lost, most assuredly; for, mark me, during the battle, as long as the blood runs, you do not perceive the decrease of your strength—but as soon as it is over, your limbs become stiff, and you are good for nothing.

“Well! We were unfit for anything; but now we saw what our women were fit for. We had done our duty—now the women did theirs. They came with rags and bandages, and Rachel, who understands something of medicine, came with tongs and scissors, and drew the balls from the flesh of Righteous, and Bill, and James, and dressed all our wounds. The other women made a fire, and first cooked a soup—for we had no appetite for anything else; and they carried us into the blockhouse, just to draw us out of the thick blood, and softly laid us down upon the tillandsea mattresses. As we were groaning on this painful couch, says Godsend, my boy: “Father,” says he, “shall I load the rifles?” “Yes,” says I, “Godsend, my dear boy, load them—I can’t, I am too weak, I can’t even raise my head.” I had been stabbed in the neck. “And the Spanish muskets?” asked Godsend. “Load them also,” says I—“load them all, though their barrels are too large for our balls—they carry sixteen and we twenty-eight to a pound—but load them, Godsend. But, my dear boy,” says I, “I’ve a notion, if the Spaniards left their muskets, their cart-ridge boxes, as they call them, are not far off. Do you understand, Godsend?” And my brave boy loaded our rifles, and the Spanish muskets with the proper cartridges, and he put them up in a row, six rifles, and twice as many muskets; and now I thought we might try and sleep. The women bid us sleep quietly; and they would watch and see if the Spaniards

would try another attack. So they kept watch alternately, but all was still—not a sound could be heard, save the vultures, and white-headed eagles, and turkey-buzzards, which made a horrible screeching. But except that, all was quiet the whole night. Godsend remained up with the women, who gave us soup, and dressed our wounds, when they opened by our movements on the couch. Thus matters stood with us till next morning.

“At the break of day, says Jonas, who was hurt least of all—‘I’ll go out with Godsend, and see whether there are any more Spaniards about here.’ So he went out with Godsend, and they found outside more than twenty of the enemy, some dead, some dying, and others slightly wounded, which last begged for a drink of water for Heaven’s sake. Jonas said they should have it, but they must first tell him whether the Spaniards were here still, or had really gone. ‘They have gone—gone away, and left us behind here, the villains! Yes, they have gone away,’ says they.

“Jonas did not believe there was peace yet; but he called one of the women, and told her to bring out some soup and water, and give a drink to the poor creatures. Says Rachel: ‘Let them starve, the dogs! the traitors! for they killed my husband!’ ‘But, Rachel,’ says I, ‘that is not Christian-like, and not spoken like your father’s daughter. If you should lay here, bleeding as we do, you would speak otherwise.’ ‘You are right, Nathan,’ says she. ‘God pardon my sins! Go, Jonas, take as much as you can carry, and look how many there are of them.’ So Jonas took a bucket of water, and one of soup, with spoons and cups, and gave the refreshing draught to the poor fellows who had fought against us, without knowing why, and told them, that as soon as they were able, we would take them to the blockhouse, and have their wounds dressed.

“But this was not an easy matter, for, as you see, the mound is at least thirty feet high, and to bring up wounded people to this height, was rather too much for the women; and we men could scarcely move ourselves, from pain and loss of blood. Then the blockhouse was so full of old lumber, and the stockade so full of dead bodies, that Rachel, my sister, had to go down and dress their wounds.

“But what were we to do with the dead? Turkey-buzzards, vermin, and animals of all kinds, swarmed round them by thousands, as Rachel told us, when she returned. We could hear this terrible noise, and it was rather a hard matter, to

see Christians devoured by beasts, instead of having them properly laid into a grave, as they ought to have been. “So,” says I, “Rachel, we cannot bring the dead to life again, but we can give them an honest grave, at least. You women understand how to handle shovels and spades. Go, then, and open a grave, and Jonas will throw in the dead. They went; and it was high time, I tell you; for the vultures, turkey-buzzards, and other varmints were already upon them. They opened a large grave, and Jonas carried the corpses thither. Whatever he found of money, watches, etc., he took. The officers altogether had about fifty doubloons—the rest had about a hundred dollars. He left them their clothes, and took only their arms and money, which was rightful booty. He collected also about fifty muskets. He threw thirty-one corpses into yonder grave, over which the hill rises, and which you now see lit up by the moon. Four, who died the following day, are buried on the other side. There were but few wounded, for our rifles are not apt to wound—they rather kill outright.

“This digging of graves took our women nearly the whole day; and in the evening, they made preparations to bring the seven, who were slightly wounded, into the blockhouse. They partly lifted, and partly pulled them up, by ropes, through the palisade and between the stockade, which had been cleared of the dead. After this christian work, we felt easy, and slept that night exceeding well. Our excellent women had plenty to do the following day, to nurse the twelve wounded, to cook, and to ease our pains, which, I tell you, were confounded severe. Among those who were not dangerously wounded, were two Acadiens. They had only received slight wounds in the shoulder-blade. And these Acadiens seemed to be good christianly fellows, and wept and cried wofully: they said that they had been forced to turn out against us—that they would never forget the good we had done them, and regretted, as they said, having gone against us at all. We told them that we regretted it also; but, as we had made their acquaintance, we hoped we would, in future, remain good friends; for the proverb says, that friends made in battle last to the grave.

“The third day we felt a little better, and I could already rise from my tillandsea couch, although with much pain. I called Rachel and the other women, and said: ‘Our position is not the most pleasant, I’ve a notion; our houses are burnt down, and we ourselves are thrown down, so that

we can scarce rise again. All around us is blood and death. I calculate we had best hold council, and conclude what is to be done." "That is a hard matter to decide," said Jonas and Righteous. "But we have done what we had to do," said James, "no backwoodsman in our position would have acted differently." "Right," says I, "you are right; we have done all we could and should do. But now, the question is not what we have done, but what we must do." "What to do?" says Rachel, who always had and still has, a great deal of her father's spirit—"what to do?" says she, "the Lord has sent to us—He has seen all that has occurred, and we must submit to whatever it is His will to send next. You must keep yourself quiet for the present," she said to me; "when you are restored, it is time enough to hold council." "But what about Asa?" says I. Asa laid in a washing-tub, covered with linen, in the very corner where he is buried. "Asa," says Rachel—"my dear Asa!" and the woman again burst into tears and sobs. "Asa," says she, "shall rest where he has fallen. His resting place shall be in the blockhouse he himself has built; and in memory of him, it shall be called *The Bloody Blockhouse*." "Rachel, you will not dig his grave here?" says I. "Not now, Nathan. I will, meanwhile, dig a grave for him outside; but when we leave this blockhouse, then he shall have his resting place within it, as is right and proper." "Then you will leave the blockhouse, Rachel?" I asked. "Three families cannot live together in this blockhouse: you cannot wish that," says she. "But where shall we go to, Rachel?" says I. "Where to?" says Rachel, astonished—"where but to the place we came from?"

"As she said this, she pointed to the prairie, and to the ruins of our burned houses. "Go there!" says I; "Rachel, you forget that we have already been driven from there, and that the Spaniards now have ten times more cause to persecute us. They will find the way easier than they did the first time, and will come more than eighty-five strong." "I tell you, Nathan, that you are not the son of your father to speak thus. I tell you," says she, "that I will not leave this place, which has drank the blood of my husband, not if ten thousand Spaniards came. And if you will go, you may—I shall remain. Asa has gained the land with his blood, and Rachel will keep it!" "This is foolish talk, Rachel," I replied; "you know well, that I would not leave you here alone. But if the Span-

iards should come——?" "Your talk is more foolish," says Rachel. "We are in the hand of God; what has come upon us, we must bear; and should the Spaniards come again, may God help us—even as he helped the three men in the fiery furnace. If the States were but a stone's throw off, or only across the Red River, we might go there until your wounds are healed; but as this is not the case, we must await the will of God, and keep still until you are recovered. But to leave the country, I will never consent."

"We knew Rachel's high spirit well enough to know that she would abide by what she had said; so nothing remained to be done, but patiently to await our recovery. We waited in patience, and as our strength returned, our courage and spirit returned also. After the space of four weeks, we had pretty well recovered our strength; though we could neither swing an axe, nor hold a rifle.

"One morning, after these four long weeks were passed, we crawled from our blockhouse, which had nearly become the grave of all, and our first walk was naturally toward the hill, where our houses had stood—and whither we will go now."

"The count stopped, for a slight motion in the saloon betrays that some of his auditors are leaving. He looks after them, through the clouds of smoke, and continued:

CHAPTER IV.

SQUATTER LIFE.

"WITH these words the old man had descended the ladder. On reaching the ground, he cast another thoughtful look at the stockade and blockhouse above: and then we went down the broad avenue, formed by the boundaries of the two forests. In gloomy silence we arrived at the summit of a hill covered by groups of trees, which looked beautiful in the moonlight. Our companions were already before us; at least all except one, who remained to lock the stockade. We might have walked probably half a mile, when we saw the rays of a light breaking through the trees, and heard the barking of dogs in all directions. We had arrived at the settlement, and the old man stopped. Pointing to the light which shone behind the trees—and a most comfortable phenomenon it was—he continued:

"Just look how this house, or hut, or whatever you may call it, was left. The walls are of cypress, which does not burn

easily. The roofs were all burned off this and the other houses; only the walls remained. Thus we stood bent on our crutches. It was only four weeks after the bloody fray; and we gazed mournfully on the desolation produced by the malicious Spaniards, thinking what it would be best for us to do. We concluded that the roof could be replaced with a little trouble, and that half of us might then find a shelter, for in the blockhouse we were packed together like herrings. "But," says Rachel, who had just ~~we~~ come along, "I've a notion the best we could do, would be to return to the blockhouse for the present." "What!" says I, "stay in the blockhouse, in that deathlike air, and in those suffocating vapors! What are you thinking about, Rachel?" "It is always better," she replied, "to be packed together, than to let our foes see us away from each other. And if they come, and find us united and holding together, they will not so soon commence the game again. 'This play cost them too much. But I wanted to say something else, about which I have thought for a long time.'" "Speak, Rachel," says I; "you are your father's daughter, and you have much of his spirit." Rachel says not a word, but points up to the northeast, where dear old Kentucky lies—she points up and says—"I feel sorry in my heart, I tell you, when I think that we stand here alone, and he, who was the very soul of all, is not with us. I become sad and gloomy, I tell you; and I've a notion I'd like to see one of the merry Kentucky faces again. If our countrymen on the Salt River knew what has happened to us here, and that we have gained this mighty and beautiful land with our blood, and Asa's life, I've a notion they would not be long saddling their horses." "So I think, too," says Righteous. "I've calculated and ruminated about it," continues Rachel; "and I've a notion if you should write to them, Nathan—write to them all nice and clean, and if you were to ask them to come—a dozen of families, or as many as would like—and say we had land enough, and wood to build houses and make fences, without being obliged to pay the county clerk a cent for fees—" "Rachel," says I, "that's a good idea, a transcendent idea, and I'll do as you say—I will write; and I've a notion, if our family on the Salt River hear what kind of a bloody frolic we have had—although we paid dear enough for it—they would drop everything and set spurs to their horses, without asking first whether Asa's bones lay in fine land or an alligator-swamp."

"Heavens!" replied Rachel, "not that—nothing more of fights and bloody frolics, if we can help it. You must not write a word about the bloody frolic which we had, but only that we found excellently fine land—for, don't you see, the fine land will fetch us respectable persons, but the bloody frolic brings gougers, rowdies, and such folks, and those we can't use." "Rachel," returned I, "you are right; you are really your father's daughter, and look further into things than we Kentuckians generally do. I will write to them just what you tell me. But how shall we get the letter to them? That's another question," says I. "You know there is no mail on the Mississippi; and it is full sixteen hundred miles up to Salt River."

"Rachel thought a moment, and then replied—"Of that I thought too. We have the Acadiens here; one of them comes from the Canadas, and speaks our tongue. He seems to be a sensible man, who would like to settle among us; and he promised to do anything for me out of gratitude." "Don't trust the Frenchmen, Rachel," says I—"don't trust them: they are all treacherous and false, and do not speak what they think. I calculate the best way will be that I myself go down to Natchez, and if the Acadien wants to oblige us, he may come along and lend us a hand for rowing. We have got some bears'-grease and a few dozen of venison hams, which we don't want. I will write two letters, and send them up by Kentucky boatmen; and it would be well if I should write three, in case one or the other should get lost—although I would prefer ringing an acre of the thickest live-oaks to the task of composing three such writings. But if I am gone and the Spaniards should come?" "I have a notion," says Rachel, "the Spaniards will not come soon. The soldiers say that they are of the garrison of Natchitoches, and that only about a hundred remained in the fort, and that it would take at least three months for soldiers to come up from New-Orleans." "Yes," says I, "but before our people come it will take six months at least; and if the government excites the Creoles and Acadiens against us—" "I've a notion they won't do it," replied Rachel. "I spoke to the man about that also. You must know—but don't speak of it aloud—the Acadiens and Creoles like each other just as much as republicans and tories in our country; they hate each other like spiders. And the Acadien says, if we would stand on their side no Creole nor soldier should hurt us—and the two young Acadiens

would settle among us, and bring others along." "That's something," says I, "which is good and bad, Rachel. I would rather that we could stay alone, without these French Acadiens, who ought to sling their hammock a house further off. They are no people for us, Rachel; they cannot govern themselves; and I would rather, as I said, that they would go further off. But we are in a free country, or rather in their country, and so we cannot prohibit them."

"And, as we are talking so, Righteous—whose eye is as sharp as an eagle's—suddenly becomes attentive, and pointed with his finger in that direction—(Nathan pointed out the spot of which he spoke.) We looked also, and saw in the rays of the morning sun, two apparitions, surrounded by great brilliancy! They appeared like celestial apparitions clothed in the full glory of heaven, and seemed to us like messengers of peace, sent to comfort us in our distress. It is an astonishing quality of our prairies, this deluding the sight, and cheating the sharpest of all the senses. You often see whole towns, craggy mountains, smooth lakes, and beautiful landscapes; sometimes you could swear you see whole armies fighting with each other, and again cherubims coming down from heaven. But when you get nearer, you find grass and bushes instead of towns, and the cherubims changed into chaps that trade in deer, or bear-skins.

"Well, as we were looking and almost staring our eyes out, at last we discovered that these apparitions were just two men; and Righteous, who, as I said, possesses a real Indian eye, cries, "They are Kentuckians, or at least from the west of the Old Dominion. I'd bet my rifle on it, for I know them by their quick step and merry and hearty appearance. They march along just as if they were at home." We were so excited, continues the old man, in a softer tone, 'you cannot imagine how eager we were. Our hearts longed to greet, once more, one of our own merry, glad, Kentucky faces. Hark ye! when you are about sixteen hundred miles from your friends and family, and have nothing, and see nothing for a change but olive-green Dons, I've a notion that if even the devil came from home, he would be welcome.

"And they were really men from the west; we knew it by their hunting-shirts, as they came nearer. We felt very strange indeed—we did not know whether we should leap or cry for joy, at seeing our countrymen. It was a great happiness, and besides, our feelings were weakened

through our sickness, from which we had but just risen. It was late in December, near new-year, and the morning was fresh, although not as cold as in old Virginia or Kentucky Territory. Through the eternal laying in bandages, and the continual feeding on soup, we had become feeble and sensitive to the cool morning air, you may believe me; we had put on our deer-skin jackets, and we looked like overgrown babies in swaddling clothes. Besides this, we had thrown blankets over us; and my sister Rachel, though rather a good-looking woman, looked like an Indian squaw. As the two men came up to us, they stared, then looked at each other and shook their heads; and finally, raised their rifles on their arms and approached nearer. Our hearts beat with joy, for now, not only the letter-writing was superfluous, but we had other causes to be glad. The two men came within twenty steps, and at last the foremost calls: "Chilly morning, this," says he; "rather fresh, I've a notion." As he said these words, we felt as if we could run to him and embrace him; for we recognized him immediately, and saw that they were not only Kentuckians, but what is more, from the Salt River, and both of them near relations. We replied, "Well, 't is rather a cool morning. But how goes it, men? where do you come from? and what brings you such a long way here?" And Rachel, with tears in her eyes, cries: "As Heaven is my hope, this is George—George, the brother of my dear Asa! Oh, George! dear brother, must you come at such an unfortunate hour?"

"George looks up, but could not recognize Rachel immediately in her blanket. He knew her now, however, by her voice. "What!" he cries, "are you Rachel, my dear sister-in-law? May I be shot, if that ain't the Rachel of my brother Asa, and my dear sister-in-law! God bless you, dear sister! How goes it with you? How does Asa? He's very likely on a track of bears; or perhaps he is at home?" "George!" says she, "Oh, George! why do you ask for my Asa? Oh, Asa! my dear Asa! Yes, he is at home—but God be with him—he is in a narrow home!" "I do n't understand you, sister?" replied George. Rachel again burst out in tears, and sobbing—for she loved him so well, and he was a good man, this Asa, good and peaceable as a child, when he was not mad; but when he *was* mad, he was *real* mad, I tell you; he was sometimes almost wild. "Oh, George!" she cried—"Oh, George! he whom you seek, my Asa, rests in a narrow house."

“And now George understood what sort of a house the narrow house was; and, says he, ‘The Lord’s will be done! I would have given a great deal, had it been otherwise. English bullets, and Hessian bayonets spared him at Trenton, at Saratoga, and at Cowpens, yet he is dispatched by a miserable Spanish musket at last! We have heard of your frolic with the Spanish Dons—the whole country talks about it; but we had no idea that my poor brother Asa’s life had to pay for it.’”

“And it was George and Dan—the Dan of old Splash,’ continued Nathan, ‘with a load of bacon, corn, flour, and such notions, and half-a-dozen of horses, and some hardy fellows, all from the Salt River, they had come down the Ohio and the Mississippi, to bring their goods to the New-Orleans market, and to see the country at the same time. If we were not too far off the way, they also intended to call and see us. They had come as far as Natchez, where they stopped, because one of their boat-hooks had broken and they needed a blacksmith. While the blacksmith was repairing the hook, he tells them about a frolic which one Asa Nollins had had with the Spaniards, somewhere out West. George did n’t say a word, but listened everywhere, in the taverns, and other public places. There was scarcely anything spoken of, but the bloody frolic we had here with the Spaniards, and all Natchez was full of it; and the settlements around Natchez, they spoke of nothing else than our battle, and the siege which we had withstood; and there was a great noise about it all over the country. They said that the governor, when he heard it, had rushed half naked into the street—as he’d a notion, and a kind o’ fear we were coming down the Mississippi direct upon New-Orleans. They said, that he spit fire and flames, and that he had sworn a bitter oath that he would have us all hanged, beheaded and roasted—just as in the barbarian times they used to hang, and roast the Turks, the Heathens, and Jews—and that he would not spare the child at its mother’s breast. The people in Natchez had given him a French paper, *The Monitor of Louisiana*,* which contained everything, except the governor’s jumping out of bed in

his shirt: I’ve a notion that this was a story.

“And the people advised him, during this terrible excitement and madness which the Spaniards felt against us Americans, not to go to New-Orleans; and, although George did not care a fiddlestick about the Spaniards and their excitement, he calculated that to go down to New-Orleans during this tumult, and to stick his head into a wasp’s nest, might be rather daring. He and Dan were calculating, in this way, what they should do with their notions and flour, till at last a planter of Natchez—a real American as ever walked in shoe-leather—says to them: “If I was in your place, I’d saddle the horse, give the spurs to him, and take a side cut just right ahead to Asa Nollins’s. He must certainly have found fine land, this Asa Nollins—for he would not have fought like a devil, with the Spaniards, to maintain an alligator swamp. I know a little of the country where Asa must be,” says he, “and there ought to be splendid cotton and sugar soil there; and, if I might advise you, I should say, sell as much of your notions as you well can, and take the rest up Red River and join Asa.” He also said, if the land was fine, as he had no doubt it was, half-a-dozen hands like their’s might get along well there; and that if they would go, he would—and for the sake of the common benefit, he was willing to do something on his part. George and Dan thought over the matter; and the hands they had with them calculated also that if the land was fine, and to be had for nothing, the bargain could not be concluded too soon. They told the planter they had not prepared themselves for a settlement—they had brought only a few axes and rifles with them—but everything else that is necessary for a settlement, they had left behind. George tells this to the planter, and the planter says, if it is nothing but that, he would soon help them—that they had a gunsmith at Natchez, who made capital rifles, and who had a supply of as good ones as ever killed a deer or buffalo—they might look for themselves, said the planter. So George and Dan went with the planter to the gunsmith, and selected half-a-dozen rifles. They two were furnished already, and now, every man had his rifle; and the planter supplied them with axes, ploughs, harness, blankets, and everything, and took part of their notions in exchange. There were other planters, who, when they heard what was going on, and that their plan was to settle in Louisiana, contributed their share, and took great inte-

* The “*Moniteur de la Louisiana*,” was the government gazette, and the only paper, at the time, in Louisiana; but which never counted more than eighty subscribers. The expedition of Nollins, however, is a matter of fact, and is mentioned in papers and historical works of that time, and several of the old planters still remember the circumstances.—En.

rest in the speculation, as in fact all Natchez seemed to do.

"George and Dan, and their six hands filled up the flat boat properly, with everything necessary for a settlement in the woods; and when all was ready, they floated down the Mississippi, and turning to the right, took their way straight up Red River. The planter had translated the French paper into English, which told them whereabouts our blockhouse must be situated, and informed them of the bayou, below the mouth of Black River.

"So they started up Red River, and came to where the Black River comes in at the right, and saw the bayou at the left, a little higher up. They put in there, and kept on upward, until at last they could go farther. They came to the bay where we had stopped, and found our tracks and keel-boat—which we had hidden in the bushes—and although they wondered at the keel-boat, for they knew we had left in a flat-boat—still they kept on following our track, and finally arrived safely in our settlement.

"There was," continued the old man, "great joy among us at their arrival; and George and Dan went immediately with Jonas, and looked at the land everywhere. After they had seen everything, and calculated upon all, they returned to the blockhouse, whither we had gone before. We had only looked after Godsend, who had set his traps for wild turkeys, and had caught ten, which we helped him to bring home. And says George, as he goes up the ladder to the stockade: "Well, there is a good blockhouse, that can stand a siege; but the land! Oh! such almighty, transcendent land! I have not seen any like it in the whole West! that's a fact."

"We explained to them now, how we had fought—how Asa had fallen—how the Spaniards had broke in, and how Godsend's ball had saved us from a great misfortune. He pressed the boy's hand, and says: "You have acted like a brave Kentuckian, —and so have you all; and old Boon himself could not have fought more gloriously. And now you are masters of the land, and if you like, and have nothing against it, I will tell you my notion." We said we had nothing against hearing his notion. "I have a notion," says he, "you have fought like glorious Kentuckians, and the land is yours; and if you have nothing against it, I will come and settle with my family." "What is that you say!" cried Rachel, almost crazy. "If we allow it, and have nothing against it? what sort of talk is that for a relation, for a brother-in-

law—for the brother of Asa?" "I am perfectly in earnest, sister-in-law," says George, "and meant just so. The land is yours—you have earned it with your blood, and consequently I think you must be asked, if one wants to build a hut. And if you don't object, your brother George will come with his wife and child, and bring another dozen, or more, brave fellows—for I see you have not too many hands." "That is just it, brother-in-law; that is just what Nathan was to write about—to inform you that we had found almighty fine land, owned by nobody—to be had just for the taking. And now all has come right." "So it has," says George. "Now I'll tell you my notion. I will leave you four fellows here, or all the six—I almost believe you would rather I would leave all six. You know them—they are all honest people's sons: the sons of Jim, and Waddy, and Sheckfast, and Skull, and Daly—the real, true Kentucky blood, from Salt River and Kentucky. They can, meanwhile, help you to block and arrange your houses, so that when we come our women can find a roof; although, if they don't find it, they won't tear their hair out."

"Of course we were all agreed; George and Dan stayed till next day; we bespoke everything, and at break of day they returned to the bayou. Jonas had gone along, and George and Dan, instead of the ark, took the boat which they had attached to their ark, and went down the Red River into the Mississippi, across to the American side, where they landed, left the boat to the waves, and walked a-foot up to Natchez. They called at the planter's, who obtained a pair of horses for them; and by the way of the Choctaw and Cherokee territory they returned to Kentucky, and arrived safely at Salt River.

"They had scarce arrived there, when they called their friends and neighbors together, and told them what almighty fine land they had seen, and how Asa Nollins and myself had built a blockhouse on it, and stood a siege, and how Asa had paid the fees with his blood.

"Our friends at Salt River, when they heard this, rose to a man, and swore a hard oath—that Asa Nollins had acted like a real Kentuckian; that he had gained the land, and kept it like a real revolutionary soldier, and that the whole county ought to give him thanks for it. They held a public meeting, and voted public thanks to Asa Nollins, and resolved that it was not proper for Kentuckians to let their hands be idle, when friends and neighbors were

fighting with strangers and foreigners for such almighty fine land; and that it became true Kentuckians to help to keep this fine land, to stand by their brave defenders, and to assist with men and notions, and all they needed to maintain their rights. They formed a committee to execute all they had resolved. And immediately a dozen of brave boys and young men came forward, determined to come to our assistance. A majority of these young men were married to their sweethearts, so they put an ark together, and three weeks afterward they went on board with their young wives, taking with them also, pigs, and cows, and other notions.

"They came safely down the Mississippi, with their wives and things, and came over to us, and we saw them exactly five months after George had left.

"Now the fun began in real earnest. We went to work to found a first rate settlement, and we went to measuring lands, cutting down trees, and putting up block-houses; you could scarce hear anything but the blows of axes. But this was only the beginning; the main thing had yet to come—when thirty families followed, thirty as good families as ever left the old for the new Kentuck. They brought with them cows, and calves, and horses, and everything, not forgetting good carpenters and mechanics.

"The two Acadiens came also, with their families, to settle in our neighborhood; they said, they liked much better to live among us than among their wild neighbors, the proud and lazy nobility. But it was not so pleasant for us to have this French race among us—particularly when we noticed that others had a notion to follow; so we found means to stop their immigration.

"They would not be a bad sort of people; on the contrary, they are good hunters, they are out day and night, and will give their game away for almost nothing. Why, these fools would give you the finest bear for a gallon of whisky; whereas, if they had brought the claw alone to market, they might have bought a whole barrel for it. But they had an abomination, which we absolutely could not stand, and that was their everlasting dancing.

"How? their dancing?" we asked.

"Yes, their dancing, and they could not leave it, they said. On Sundays, particularly, it seemed as if their soles could not be quiet—as incredible as such a thing may appear to Christian people. It was a real horror to see these old and young fools jumping about in their blankets, bragrutes,

and mitasses; and we calculated a long time how this abomination could be stopped, and our settlement be freed of this disgrace."

"At last we concluded on a public meeting, in which we made it a law that dancing should not be forbidden, and that everybody was at liberty to use their legs as they thought best; but the playing for the dance was forbidden under penalty of a fine of five dollars. This law did not please these French fellows at all, and they refused to recognize our authority; but we told them if they would enjoy the advantages of our community, they must put up with the restrictions which it prescribed. They stared at us, almost astonished, as if they knew not what to say; at last they replied that we were neither syndicus, governor, nor commander, and consequently had no authority to give laws. Our authority they refused to recognize, saying it was self-assumed, and not by the "grace of God"—for these fools, you must know, considered their commanders as authorities actually instituted by the Almighty! We had nothing against this opinion, as they were not Americans, but only Frenchmen—to dispute with whom, we held was beneath our dignity. But their doings became unbearable to us, and we excluded them, and would not permit them to cross our line.

"They stood this for half a year, and then most of the families moved away. A few, however, remained—and among them the Acadiens. They often looked over our fences, at our work, and at last they prayed that we would again receive them into our community, and let them use the roads we had laid out, and the sawmills we had begun to build. We deliberated about it, and finally granted their request, on condition that they should give up the abomination of dancing, and conduct themselves, on Sabbaths, like reasonable beings. They gave up their jumping about, and by-and-by became respectable people and well off; and they are now brave, good citizens, though certainly not Americans."

"But what did the Spanish Government say to your doings?" I at last found opportunity to observe.

"What they said," replied the old man, shaking his head—"what they said, we don't know; but they carried on a mighty war in the papers, and complained about our breaking the law of nations. We almost laughed at this, to hear these Frenchmen and Spaniards complain of breaking the laws of nations—they! who in America care as much for the laws of nations—ay, just as much as

much as Satan cares for the New Testament. We paid no attention to their complaints; they tried to annoy us, but we had, meanwhile, become too strong for them. At last they went to the central government, in Philadelphia, and complained there; but this was just water to our mill.'

"How—water to your mill?" I asked.

"Do you believe that old John, tory as he is, would have dared to bring citizens into trouble, and citizens who have done more for the good of the Union than—I would not have advised him, I tell you. But—"

"The old man interrupted himself, and passed his hand across his forehead, as if considering. 'Let that pass, now,' said he, 'you have heard enough of the history of the Bloody Blockhouse for the present, and of Asa's settlement. You may now have a notion of where you are, and that we, poor as you see us now, are not the people to be frightened at any man, or anything—that is enough for you to know just now. You shall hear the rest another time, after we have eaten salt together.'

"We would have given a great deal," observed the count, "to have heard more of the future plan and views of this strange man; but his determined manner, and a certain motion toward the light, kept our tongues silent.

"He walked with enormous strides up to a rough fence, through the gate of which we entered toward the house. Upon a slight tap, the door opened. The old man took our hands, and leading us up the stairs in darkness, brought us into a garret chamber, where we found an immense bed, surrounded with a musquito bar. There were several chairs, and a table covered with a white cloth. Upon it stood a bottle with glasses, and the light which had hitherto served as our pilot. The old man took the bottle, and filling the three glasses, drank to our healths. We tasted the drink; it was fine East India Madeira, such as I only remember to have drunk in some of the first houses in England.

"Where did you get this excellent Madeira from?" we asked in surprise. 'Do you like it?' he replied; 'I have obtained a dozen of demijohns from New-Orleans.' 'From New-Orleans! then spite of your warfare with the Spanish government, you are in communication with New-Orleans.' The man smiled contentedly. 'Pshaw! a kind of armistice, which probably will turn to war again, perhaps may bring the ratification of peace. I hope the latter—'tis for the interest of both.' 'The interest of

both!' we repeated. The tone of our voice had—as you may imagine—a strong sound of irony. The old man looked at us with a cunning smile. 'Ay, something like that,' said he. 'Your Spanish government officers, you understand, are men like ourselves, not a whit better—on the contrary—. But, enough of this; to-morrow is another day, and we must save something, till, as I said before, we have eaten salt together. Now finish your Madeira; you'll not find better in New-Orleans—it is from my commissioner, Monsieur la Place.' 'How! Monsieur la Place your commissioner?' we asked, doubtingly. We had letters of recommendation to him; he was a Frenchman by birth, a relation of Lacalle, and banker of the government. 'Tis so,' said the old man, 'Monsieur la Place attends to my affairs, and receives my cotton and tobacco.' 'Then you raise cotton and tobacco?' we asked, more and more astonished. The old man smiled again. 'Are you astonished at this? Truly, I had almost forgotten that you came from the Attakapas, where they may not have given you the best notion of us.' 'To tell the truth,' we interrupted, laughing, 'they have not as bad a notion of you, as you have of Louisiana, to judge by your own confession.' The old man smiled again. 'They are strange people, your Attakapas,' he continued, without listening—'strange people, who really need to be awakened from their sinful, lazy life. But they will be awakened—they will—' 'Do you think so?' we asked. 'Pshaw! I have told you already, that to-morrow is another day; but you Frenchmen,' he said, shaking his head—'one is never done talking with you. If you were as smart in everything as with your tongue! Ah! you are dangerous people, the best of you!' 'I believe, old man, that we can learn something from you.' 'Well, I calculate you might,' said he, chiming in with us. 'So good night; drink your Madeira, and mind and cover yourselves up warm.'

"We looked after the old man," continued the count, "for a more strange phenomenon we had never met in the whole of our varied and eventful lives. There he stood, the farmer in his leather-jacket—the republican, backwoodsman and wood-cutter, who, with inconceivable *sang froid*, raises his shield against the Spanish government, conquers its troops, stands in a hostile position to the governor and the government, settles with hundreds of his countrymen, in this strange and hostile land, and does it so quietly, so comfortably, so perfectly *sañs façon*, as if he had

thrashed one of his backwoods neighbors and carried his rights of settlement, title-deeds and claims, within his fist or waistcoat pocket. We stared after him, for such a character we had never yet met. This practical good sense—philosophical wisdom I might say, so strangely mixed with ignorance—this gentle feeling poisoned with heartlessness—this simplicity and cunning, obstinacy and suppleness, completely bewildered us; for these opposite characters were all interwoven and amalgamated so singularly in this most singular man, that we, men of the world as we were, and possessing knowledge of character, as we believed, stood, for the first time in our lives, staring at the golden fluid in our glasses, and utterly unable to express our varied feelings of emotion and surprise. And what was strangest of all, was, that although we could not deny the danger of this man's vicinity, and had no doubt of his true character—for, that he had principally excited this insatiable appetite for lands among his fellow-citizens, with the intention of leading the stream of immigration into our country, and thus to overthrow the power of the Spanish government, was clearly before our eyes—the strangest thing was, that we could not feel angry with him, spite of this certainty, but rather began to be pleased with his manner and opinions. Whether it was his and his party's bull-headed determination—whether the spontaneous respect for courage, even in an enemy, or the simple diplomacy of nature—I fancied I had never seen more dangerous plans masked behind more naïve and inviting heartiness—or, finally, whether the sparkling Madeira produced this production of ideas; we will not inquire into the cause. The latter, however, might have contributed its share to this humiliating vacillation, as oddly as such a confession may sound from the lips of the loyal cavalier of an ancient house. Certain it is, my patriotic indignation, which, during the sketches of the old man, had frequently threatened to explode, had suffered a severe shock at the first taste of his Madeira.

"But you cannot imagine," continued the count, smiling, "what wonders a bottle of Madeira will produce under such circumstances. At every fresh glass our ideas became more philanthropic. A man, thought we, who receives such delicious Madeira from his commissioner, the government banker, such a man could not possibly be the villain report described him to be. A whole train of comfortable, though somewhat liberal, sentiments followed this

most natural conclusion; and our loyal turn of thought received, on this evening, a shock which somewhat changed its direction for the future, and caused us strangely to contrast the present with the life we had hitherto led.

"We emptied the bottle, threw off the fragments of our wardrobe, which rather stuck in parts than hung entirely to us, went to bed, and were soon lost in slumber, such as a king might have envied."

CHAPTER V.

SQUATTER LIFE.

"OUR awaking presented a strangely comic scene. We found ourselves lying in what these gentry would call 'an almighty large family bed'—a musquito-net hung around it, and a canopy above, so large that it might have served for a good sized billiard-table. The room was a garret-room, and it began to grow (as garrets are wont in summer-time) extremely hot. Neither Lassalle nor myself had been accustomed to sleep in pairs. A strange feeling came over us. I felt as if I was stewing in the boiler of a steamboat; and as the vapors, which rose around me, became every moment more overpowering and repulsive, I—being unable to resist their pressure—draw back. Feeling something which opposed my retreat, my fright became so intense that I awoke and cried aloud, in what language or in what terms I know not. The something behind me answers with a '*Parbleu!* Who is there? a man?' 'Who is there?' I cried in return, 'a man?' '*Morbleu!* what is that?' cries my adversary, grasping hold of me. I started as from an asp; and thus we bounded at each other and around the bed. Finally we became conscious, rubbed our eyes in astonished recognition, and broke out into loud laughter. 'Where are we?' inquired Lassalle. 'Where are we?' I echoed. Again we rubbed our eyes, and Lassalle threw back the curtains. '*Ma foi!* In the residence of his republican excellency, who declares war to his Catholic majesty of both Indies.' 'And who sent thirty-five or more *Barbenoires* into the other world.' 'And has taken possession of their good province of Louisiana.' 'Which is simply the offal and pourings out of the dirty rough fellow Mississippi.' Again we broke out into laughter; and then, from the cage in which we were confined, like a pair of wild beasts, we looked out into the room.

"It was, as the rooms and chambers of backwoodsmen usually are, decorated with the entire family wardrobe. About twenty petticoats, of different sizes, were on one wall, and on the other leather inexpressibles, hunting-shirts, vests and coats, in all the colors of the rainbow. But that which appeared to us most interesting was the tapestry. The walls were really papered; but with what? With ploughs, chains, tables, seats, ships, boats, shoes, cattle, laughing-negroes and negresses, with bundles under their arms, some running, some standing, others engaged in various occupations, and all excellently and faithfully represented in wood-cuts. We rubbed our eyes again, and read in large and well shaped letters: 'Poulson's Philadelphia Advertiser'—'New-York Gazette'—'Ra-leigh Daily Register'—'Boston Courier'—and we jumped at once from bed in our shirts, to examine this new fashioned tapestry more closely, as it was at present the most interesting matter we could find.

"It consisted of newspapers, with which the walls were entirely covered over. There were attacks against George III., and the English ministers—against Congress, and Adams, who was then President—European political news of the day, from '76 down, served in American cuts to the American public. The majority of the columns, however, were filled with the aforesaid 'notions,' to use Nathan's characteristic expression, such as hats, boots, shoes, flour and whisky-barrels, all plainly presented to the eyes of readers or non-readers. The whole was a pattern card of public life, which seemed designed to lead us easily into the rudiments of republican manners. Now, indeed, this decoration of the gazettes—holding forth to us, as in a mirror, the public affairs, the culture, manners and opinions of the people—fell on our minds like sunbeams, and first enlightened our ignorance, and arranged our confused ideas. What I have remarked before about Nathan and his companions, as Americans, in relation to republics, became now clear to us. We began to see that we were near a really republican land; among republicans—born and absolute republicans—which, be it understood, are removed as far as heaven from our French republicans. The thought began to dawn within us, that these republicans, differing as much in origin as in principles from ours, could not be measured by the same rule or argument. Formed from the higher classes of European population, their dependence on the crown of England had been altogether different from that of our

people to their hereditary monarchs. Their revolution and its consequences must therefore be judged another way. Our eagerness to express this opinion, and the consequent debate upon it, made us forget that we were still standing in our shirts. We were reminded of it by a sudden, and powerful rap at the door of the room. We had not time to jump back into the bed, so we threw such portions of the family wardrobe as we could get, over us, without hesitation.

"The door opened and Nathan entered, seemingly in a hurry, and with a wrinkled forehead. When he saw us in the dress of backwoods-women, he stood amazed, and stared at us with open eyes. He paused for a moment, as if to compose himself, then taking a roll of Virginia weed from his tin-box, he cut off a so-called 'quid,' and pushing it into his mouth, looked at us, shaking his head. We had great difficulty to keep from laughing outright. 'Well, now!' he commenced, 'that's what I call a frolic—a downright frolic, by the living jingo! and my name shan't be Nathan Strong, if that ain't a fact!' 'We have the notion it is so,' we replied, with corresponding seriousness. 'Well, I guess it is,' repeated the old man, rolling his lump of tobacco from the left to the right cheek. 'Tell you what, monshurs, I calculate you are in a glorious merry humor. That's a fact.' 'Calculate we are,' we replied. 'Did you ever see in your lifetime such a thing?' said he to himself, 'to wrap themselves up in Mary's and Elizabeth's petticoats! My! why, they must be downright crazy.' 'Friend!' commenced Lassalle, holding Elizabeth's petticoat with one hand, and planting the other in his side: 'I've a notion you are a mighty man, and a learned man too, even if you have not discovered the peril in which you placed Louisiana, when you declared war to his Catholic majesty of Spain and both the Indies.' The features of Nathan changed and grew dark, but Lassalle was not to be baffled. 'But still, spite of your Bonapartian talent and generalship,' he continued, 'which has forced the passes of Louisiana, as he did the passes of the Alps, it would be hard for you, *we've* a notion, to find entrance or pass into these *soidisant* and *cidevant* pantaloons.' And saying so, Lassalle lifted, with one foot, the tattered fragments of our wardrobe.

"Nathan took up these relics of former propriety, and examined them on all sides, with a sharp eye. 'I'll tell you my notion at once,' he said, shaking his head, and casting the fragments down again; 'I cal-

culate it is nothing less than impossible to wear them breeches.' 'Hit it exactly,' we interrupted. 'Nothing less than not fit to be worn,' he repeated, without noticing the interruption; 'and that it would be rather hard to find the pieces again in the bushes, in the swamps, or in the prairies, where they were lost. But I'll tell you my notion at once. I calculate here,'—he pointed to the wall—'here is stuff enough to give two such monshurs as you are, a tolerable decent appearance; and that Mrs. Strong will have enough linen left, any how, to give you each an honest shirt into the bargain.' 'For good pay we calculate she will.' He overheard these words, stamped with his foot, and replied angrily—'You may arrange that with the old woman, and James, and Godsend. I do n't meddle with their affairs. But see that you come out of the petticoats, and quickly, too—for if Mary and Elizabeth see you in their clothes, nothing would bring the girls to put them on again in all their life, I tell you.'

"During these words the door opened, and there entered a compact, round, female figure, strongly colored with a somewhat large red nose—which seemed to have made close acquaintance with the Madeira, or stomach consolation—thin, contracted lips, receding chin, full cheeks, and sharp, small, blue eyes. Her features evinced possible or occasional good-humor—although now suffering under a complete eclipse of the sun, or stultified with that amazing apathy, which is, I suppose, a principal feature in the character of the inhabitants of the backwoods.

"If Nathan's astonishment at our appearance had been great, that of the lady was greater. For a while she looked inquiringly at her husband—as if to ask whether we were in our right senses—and then she looked at us. 'Have we the honor to see Mrs. Strong?' we inquired of the lady, with a bow. 'My!' she cried out to Nathan. 'Tell you, old woman,' said he, 'tell you, it's all right. Has n't got them, but are, I calculate, Frenchmen—you know.'

"These words were accompanied by that peculiar look of intimation which only backwoodsmen can give. 'My!' cried the lady again. 'Tis a fact,' he replied, 'would, but has n't got them,' he added, appeasingly. She looked at us, and again at him. 'Well, now, Nathan, that's considerable queer.' 'Ay, so it is, it has n't got them, old woman—but it's queer, that's a fact. Now, I'll tell you, yes, I'll tell you my notion all at once. I calculate that

you'll fetch clean clothes for the two monshurs, and that they'll pick out here what they wan't. Their clothes are torn, just as if they'd 'a been on two wild prairie horses; but it has n't got them.' 'And they hav n't got it?' she inquired, evidently more consoled. 'As little as you or me.' 'They hav n't got it?' she repeated. 'Now they raised such an unlawful noise, with their talking, and crying, and laughing, and jumping, I did n't know what to make of it. They are queer folks, any how; and then to put on Elizabeth's and Mary's petticoats.' 'That's their fashion, old woman; but I am considerably glad that it has n't got them. I was about the block-house, you know, and a' telling them all about it, and you know the swamp is not a thousand steps from there, and it stagnates now, and is just the most dangerous time of the year; it spreads its vapors around, in the morning and evening, which, because they are so much lighter than the atmosphere, it likes so well to raise. Well, I saw the night spectre come over, and therefore broke up, and brought them home. You know in such cases I always take a couple of glasses of Madeira, and cover myself up warm; and the perspiration brings out the bad vapors, and the Madeira disperses the settling, even if it should stick like leeches to the veins. 'I would not have thanked you, Nathan,' she answered—'I would not have thanked you at all, if you had brought guests into the house who had got the shakes.' 'But they hav n't got it, I tell you,' remonstrated the old man, impatiently. 'The shake has them as little as it has you or me, and it was very unnecessary to run off like mad, tear open a door, and bring trouble into a society which was just a voting, and afore I had time to throw in my vote.' 'I calculate you've given it, notwithstanding, as a regulator ought to. Guess some one is made to keep up order here,' said she, sticking both fists into her sides.

"Nathan shrugged his shoulders again, in that peculiar backwoodsman's style; passed his tobacco to his depository on the right to the left side of the cheek, and gravely spoke as follows:

"'I've a notion, old woman, your hair would not be a single item more gray, if you should not load your brains with things which, I calculate, do not concern you. I tell you, old woman, I tell you they don't belong here, the affairs from there; I am here now about the things here—am here now on behalf of these two French monshurs, and I tell you, here they are. It's a fact, old woman, they're here. How and

why is not the question, and nobody has to trouble himself about it. But I've a notion they are just here because I want 'em to be, and I tell you, they shall stay here as long as they like. And now look you at these things; I'll not say that these here pants, or whatever they may be, are whole, for I've a notion they are not—but I calculate it would perplex you somewhat, to find all that has been lost of 'em between here and *Côte-gelle*, and to fix them again to a whole. I calculate it would not look very decent to see two men running about the house in broken ware, when there are notions enough to furnish them, and fix 'em up whole and nice. So then, I calculate the best that can be done, is just to fetch up a pair of ready-made shirts, and pick out among the trowsers and jackets of James and Godsend, and so bring them into decent fix.' 'I calculate,' replied the woman, with astonishing *sang-froid*, to this *chef d'œuvre* of backwoodsman eloquence—'I calculate I'll carry up the ready-made shirts, and meanwhile, you may choose there among James and Godsend's notions; and the best to be done, will be to bring them to a more decent appearance.' 'I calculate,' interrupted Nathan, 'that so far all's right, and I'll pick out from among the notions, and you will be a good wife, and make an end of this prattling and talking. What! you, the wife a backwoodsman, and make such alarums and tantarums about two Frenchmen and a pair of ragged breeches!'

"This last compliment," remarked the count, "paid to our *cidevant* pantaloons and their respective possessors, came too much à l'improvisatore, for us longer to restrain the laughter which we had suppressed hitherto with great difficulty. We both burst out together; and laughed so loud, that even Nathan was a little infected by it, and the lady, who was going off, put her head once more into the room, almost paralyzed with astonishment. But who could withstand the drollery of this scene? There we stood, Lassalle in Elizabeth's, and myself in Mary's petticoat; the left hand holding the aforesaid petticoat, the right forcibly before our mouths, while the two matrimonial belligerents conversed so unceremoniously, in so dry, so rough, and again so jokingly *naïve* a manner, about the torn breeches and the ragged Frenchmen! They appeared to us, just like a couple of bears at play together, at whose queer movements and funny tapplings, you are so amused, that you forget that their paws are hard and heavy, and that they hurt each other terribly.

" 'Well, I calculate,' continued the old man, 'that's done; and I'll now just pick out your fixins. But you frightened Mrs. Strong with your cross-jumps, and French-er-capers; and she did not think but that you had seen the vapor-spectre last night, when we stood over there on the blockhouse; and so got the shake, and thought that made you jump so. At that she comes bolt over into our meeting. I had gave my vote, when she, somewhat frightened, whispers to me how you were going on, even worse than old Tom—Whisky-Tom, as he was called—who lately died; he also had the shake, old Tom had, and then came the ague-cake to it, and worked at him—it was just this season. He had got it from the swamp. But I'm glad it is something else—ay, I'm very glad. And now, I'll pick out your notions.'

"With these words, the good Nathan began to pick out 'our notions,' as he called them. 'I've a notion,' he began—taking down a pair of leather-breeches, and measuring us—'these leather conveniences will do it. They are new, these are, I calculate; the hams of the deer, from which this skin was taken, hang outside still—and Leather-Ned has tanned them, I calculate—'

"Suddenly he stopped, listened, made a terrific bound toward the hole in the roof, and hardly had he looked through, when, with the words: 'Hang these crazy Frenchers! I forgot them over there, altogether,' he ran toward the door. 'But, Nathan, our notions!' I cried, stepping before him. 'Curse your notions!' he muttered, pushing me aside, and hurrying with great strides out of the open door, and down the stairs.

"We looked after him for a moment, and then broke out again into loud laughter. 'But what did he think of so suddenly?' asked I. 'Something must have happened outside,' remarks Lassalle. And he put his head through the window, or rather the hole in the roof. 'Well, Lassalle, what do you see?' 'The settlement seems to be strong, was Lassalle's reply. 'I count already thirty heads.' 'What kind of people are they?' 'Weather-beaten and sun-burnt faces, athletic figures, and among them some fine young men.' 'What are they doing? what do they want?' 'That's hard to tell; they still continue coming from the blockhouse: I count forty already. *Morbleu!* what's that? One has nothing on but a shirt! What is he to do? Is it a canonical penance? or do these cannibals mean to eat him for a *déjeuner à la fourchette*? 'Let us

see, Lassalle, ain't you mistaken?' Impatiently I pulled at Elizabeth's petticoat, drew Lassalle away from the hole in the roof, and squeezed my own head through it. It was as Lassalle had said.

"Before a blockhouse, about two hundred paces from us, at the foot of the hill, in a group of catalpa-trees, and which appeared to be designated for common meetings, was an assemblage of about forty squatters, surrounded by a numerous brood of young squatters, and squatteresses, and in their middle a fellow in his bare shirt.

"The fellow seemed not to feel very comfortable—his grimaces and distorted features expressed anything but pleasure. He rushed about furiously, dashed from side to side, jumped forward to one or the other of the backwoodsmen, and seemed to threaten them with his fists, although without making any visible impression on their apathetic souls. Some smoked, and others spoke together, but none seemed desirous to hurry the business they were there to undertake. The arrival of Nathan, however, occasioned some movement among the phlegmatic mass; the company formed into a circle, and evidently listened to his words, which, however, the great distance prevented us from hearing. Two of the squatters then put their pipes upon the window of the blockhouse, and approaching the man in the shirt, they tried to get him into their power. He retreated, and struggled to escape; but after a desperate resistance, he was taken, and tied with ropes to one of the catalpas, with his back toward the assemblage. The fellow bawled as if he had been stuck on a spear.

"I do not know," remarked the count; "whether it was the rosy humor in which we had awoke, and which caused us to look at everything through a pleasant medium—whether the remembrance of our recent scene with Nathan and his wife was lurking in our minds—or if it was, simply the grotesque, wooden, immovable, and yet decided manner and appearance of these backwoodsmen, which excited our risibility, but the whole scene, although not fit for moving laughter, made us laugh loud and heartily. As I said, the movements of the squatters were so new, and appeared so queer, so irresistibly droll to our eyes; you must see these people, on such occasions, ere you can condemn or excuse us.

"The two young backwoodsmen, who had tied the man in the shirt, now pulled off their hunting-frocks, stripped up their shirt-sleeves, and took each of them a whip—which, as we were later informed, were cowhides—and began to deal heavy blows

upon the back of the fellow. Blow upon blow fell rapidly. I never saw so quick, and such an efficient execution. In less than a minute the shirt was thrashed to pieces, and the man stood stark naked, with bleeding back, and only a piece of cotton tied around the hips. The fellow roared with pain; but with all this, he showed an unmanageableness, a furious brutality, which prohibited the entrance of pity, or compassion into our hearts. Finally, Nathan winked to the two men to stop.

"During this punishment the squatters had stood looking quietly and coldly on, some smoking pipes, others cigars, and a third portion had gone to a farther part of the house, with the young brood, whither they were now followed by the two executioners, who had untied the offender from the tree. Nathan and the rest followed them. I drew my head away from the hole, because a projection of the roof prevented me from seeing any more on that side. Lassalle had, meanwhile, placed a straw chair on the table, and promoting himself to one of the cross-beams, broke or loosened a clap-board, and so got the backwoodsmen into sight again. 'Won't you come up?' he cried out to me; 'it is worth while—a glorious view; really, this is a mighty, a transcendent land!' 'Yes; but what are the bush-men doing?' 'They have dragged the victim to the other side; he still thrashes around like an alligator.' 'Well, what are they doing to him?' 'What do they do?—what do they do?' replies Lassalle, and suddenly breaks out into loud laughter. 'What is it?' 'Come here, for Heaven's sake! Only see! as sure as I live, they have dyed him raven-black.' I jumped upon the table, the chair, the cross-beam, lifted another board, and looked—one moment over the beautiful, glorious panorama—the next at the squatters, who were collected again in one mass.

"Well, messieurs," continues the count, "it took me some minutes before I could find out what these people were about. The mass was in great agitation—the youngsters howling, jumping, and crying; the older ones were posted around two barrels, each barrel as high as themselves. From one of these barrels looked out a human head, which, however, I could not recognize, for neck and head were coal black, or rather bronzed black, like our old negroes. Around him stood several backwoodsmen with long wooden spoons, which they dipped into the barrel and then emptied over the head of the fellow. He cried and screeched fearfully. The scene was

altogether strange, and to us, unaccountable. Now came two squatters with long poles, which they placed between the arms of the new negro, lifted him from the first barrel and transferred him to the second, into which they threw him with loud hurrahs. A cloud of feathers covered, for one moment, the whole band. The barrel in which the fellow now lay was filled with feathers; and the backwoodsmen rubbed anew his head, shoulders, arms, and all parts which were sticking out of the barrel. Immediately he was covered with feathers over and over—a horrible caricature of the two-legged race, which elicited another hysteric laugh from us. The confusion and uproar became louder, and wild hurrahs rent the air. Some of the squatters had thrown themselves on the backs of their horses, which stood tied to the building; others had taken the tarred and feathered fellow from the barrel, cut the ropes with which his arms were tied, and, upon a sign which Nathan gave, the whole mass set into motion, and proceeded with deafening shouts down the hill, toward the prairie. The feathered fellow looked for a moment around, then uttered a yelling cry, and began to dance in a circle. The tar, although healing, gave him, apparently, the most excruciating pain, for he acted like one crazy—jumped high up, gnashed his teeth as if in imprecation, and with the most furious bounds he galloped down the hill, at such speed that his pursuers could hardly keep pace with him.

"There was something wildly exciting in this spectacle—something mad, daringly furious, in the whole scene. The horribly feathered monster with his satanic leaps—behind him the brood of young squatters, and a herd of shirtless little negroes, and then the picaninies of both sexes, dogs, cats, and all howling, crying, shouting, and barking, as the horsemen cracked their whips and dashed with frantic zeal among them.

"Before us, the rolling prairie spread its surface of flowers and fragrance, far away into the blue distance. The tall grass moved gently in the morning breeze, floating and undulating like the ocean waves; to the right and left of the wave-like eminence stood groups of colossal cotton-trees, under which appeared the huts of squatters, surrounded by corn, tobacco, and cotton-fields, which spread down by the sides of the hill; from those not disagreeable hiding-places, the young negro brood broke out in mad ecstasy, leaping over the fences, falling, yelling, crying, and shrieking, in that tone so peculiar to the blacks, and with barbarous joy united in the demon-

like chase. The squatters themselves had stopped at the foot of the hill, from whence they directed the pursuit, crying to the young brood not to spare the feathered fellow, but to chase, harass, and beat him to the last. But these incitements were unnecessary; for the chase had taken a wild, a savage character. It had become a chase for life or death; and every moment we expected to see the miserable wretch overtaken, and torn to pieces by his merciless pursuers.

"In his frantic haste he had blindly (the tar and feathers had no doubt closed his eyes) run down the hill toward the prairie; but stopped by the high grass, jumped back, turned to the right, leaped a fence, and fled into a corn-field. Chased out of this, he had run to the left again—the whole brood of his two and four-legged pursuers after him. The noise became painful, and the sight revolting—we were not able to stand it any longer; we sickened with anxiety and excitement, and spite of ourselves retreated.

"Our look fell into the chamber. Mrs. Strong was in it, and stood at the table, coolly spreading out the linen for us, as if we were going to hear a sermon. 'For Heaven's sake, woman! What does this horrible scene—this inhuman chase—mean?' we cried. 'My!' she cried, almost astonished, and looking up at us; but in the next moment she held her hand before her eyes, and turned her back to us. 'My!' she cried again, 'I calculate, nevertheless, it is not all right in your heads, whatever Mr. Strong may say against it; and either the shake, or something worse, has got you!' 'For Heaven's sake, woman, stop this horrible play!' we cried again. 'Play, you call this?' replied the mistress—'play? Ay, I would not often see this play; it is a horrible play, it is—I've a notion, a savage frolic!' And she left the chamber. Again we looked out. The pursued victim continued running to the left, like a bull wounded and blinded, followed by the whole band, the horsemen behind, cracking their whips and roaring with loud hurrahs. He was again impeded by a fence. Unable to get over, he seized hold of it convulsively, and, biting like a madman with his teeth into the wood, surrounded the rails with both arms. The whole band streamed toward him, and we expected a horrible catastrophe would close the inhuman spectacle. The horsemen dealt blows to the left and right, at the dogs, cats, negroes and negresses, and after having broke their way to the victim, they surrounded him. One threw a sling around his shoulders,

and with the same sudden jerk with which the lasso-driver brings his horse upon the hind-feet, turns, and then throws him back again into his wild run; he threw the unhappy wretch from the fence to the ground, pulled him up again with the sling, and dragging him behind, he and the other horseman took a direction toward the western forest.

"We looked for a moment at the savage band, as they disappeared under the trees, and then upon the dogs, cats, negroes and negresses, who had been silent during the last scene; and who stared now, with something like a shudder, after those who had disappeared in the darkness of the forest. There remained no doubt but that the monsters took their victim to the forest, there to receive the final blow.

"We had seen enough of the backwoodsman's life—so much, that, without speaking a word, we closed the opening in the roof, stepped down on the chair and table, and took to our torn dresses, firmly resolved to leave these savage squatters immediately.

"Lassalle was trying to find the entrance into the remnants of his breeches, and I had mine in my hand, when Nathan entered.

"His mien had something of official dignity, and betrayed high satisfaction. For a moment he looked inquiringly at us; then he went to the family wardrobe on the wall, and taking down several dresses, he continued: 'I calculate, these leather conveniences will do for you—and these here for you.' The last words were directed to me. 'I believe we'll try to do with ours, bad as they have been used,' was my reply. 'If you would do us one favor, you might give us a guide to the plantation of the next Acadien.'

"Nathan looked at us with extended eyes, but without changing a single feature in his impassible leather face: 'A guide to the house of the next Acadien, you want? Ay, that you may have—it is not a hundred miles, I calculate; but still, you will fix yourself up a little, and take a breakfast.' 'Thank you for your breakfast—we'll see whether we can't get one in the Acadien's house.' 'I have not the notion of stopping you,' replied Nathan, in the same cool tone; 'but you will first fix yourself up decently, and take breakfast; it is certainly not a day's travel, but is still six or seven miles to the block-house of the next Acadien; and then we have to speak a word or two together, over there in the common hall.' 'Thank you for your breakfast and your notions; but,

indeed, we cannot guess what we can have to arrange together,' we replied, somewhat haughtily. 'Thank you for your breakfast and your notions, but can't guess what we could have to arrange together?' murmured Nathan to himself. 'Pshaw! I took you for Frenchmen—for persons who have decency within them, and decent manners—who would not run out in a dress which a negro would have set his foot on, and which is broke up like a wrecked boat, with ribs and sides in full escape—and, besides, that's no manners, strangers, I tell you; to cast off offered hospitality with scorn, ain't no manners—I tell it you; and I take it——' These last words were spoken in a rough and menacing tone. We looked proudly at the man. 'I say, I'll tell you what it is, strangers, I've a notion that you are unsatisfied with what you have seen over there—the tarring and feathering?' 'And you ask,'—we broke out, finding it no longer in our power to restrain our indignation—'you ask if we are satisfied, after this inhuman, savage, fiendish, malicious play with human life and dignity—this disgraceful scene, which would dishonor cannibals—much more Christians and republicans, which you boast yourself to be?' We were unable to suppress our feelings; they must out, follow what would. But Nathan remained unmoved; only a slight, mocking smile flitted over his features, which soon changed to sternness.

"'I have known you Frenchmen and Creoles for the last seven years,' said he. 'Ah! you Frenchmen,' he continued, with a dry, sardonic smile, 'you are queer people, I calculate; sometimes so tenderly soft, that you—I am told—shed tears about old stories in the theatre houses; and then again, so mighty strong and hard-hearted, that you spill the blood of your own countrymen like water, and hack off their heads by thousands—so methodically, too, the axe won't please you any longer, you must have machines, and do the business really systematic. You drown your sisters, wives, daughters, mothers, and dance merry dances—carmagnoles, you call them—to their death cries. I calculate it is there on the wall, in some of the gazettes pasted up there; you can read them,' said the man, smiling, and pointing at the papers. 'Those, too, are republicans, Nathan,' we replied, 'republicans to whom you might well reach the hand of brotherhood, after the heroic feat you have to-day accomplished.' 'Ay! and who has made us what we are, man?' inquired Nathan—'who has made these we look on—who made us re-

publicans? Who else but your aristocrats, and our English Tories?"

"This logic of the backwoodsman," remarks the count, "came so unexpectedly upon us, that we stared at him, somewhat taken a-back.

"I tell you what it is," he continued, "we will not dispute about this point. We have nothing to do with your affairs, nor you with ours; let every one sweep before his own door. And don't you trouble your heads about what you have seen—its all in order what you saw; and I will tell you more, and I do n't tell you a lie neither, I say—that we went expressly down to the *Côte-gelée* yesterday, among your wild Acadiens, to bring you a message to come up here." "You went down to the *Côte-gelée*, to bring a message to us, whom you do n't know?" we inquired, shaking our heads doubtfully. "That is something new." "May be new to you, but nevertheless it's a fact. We went down, and had the notion to send you word by an Acadien, that you, or one of you, should come up. We otherwise would not willingly go among the rascally Acadiens." "Do you know us?" we inquired, proudly.

"Nathan gave no answer, but discharged from his mouth the despoiled quid, and replenished it with a fresh one. 'You did not say a syllable yesterday, nor all last evening, which could lead us to such a supposition,' remarked Lassalle. 'Whether we know you or not,' he finally began, 'we'll see; for what and why we wanted to have you here, you'll see and hear. I've told you already, that everything has its time—a fool speaks too soon, the wise man in time.' 'And you wanted us to be present at this horrible spectacle?' 'Ay, that's what we wanted, it's a fact: that you should see with your own eyes, hear with your own ears, and have the liberty to say what you had seen, where and when you choose. We do n't go behind the bush, we do n't. Old Nathan is not the man who keeps behind the bush. He need not be afraid to show to the whole world, what he has done as regulator. I tell you,' he continued, 'it is a fact. We went yesterday down to the *Côte-gelée* expressly to send a message to one of you—that was our only errand, I've a notion. We had met with the young Acadien, who told us you were the man yourself, and almost starved to death at the bargain.'

"We looked at the old man, and then at each other. Now we could no longer doubt his assertion, although it seemed mysterious and strange. But this stiff, cold secrecy—this brooding reserve—be-

came now doubly uncomfortable, almost gloomy. The man seemed to us a desperate character. He was born for an inquisitor; and would have bit off his quid with the same coolness, under the shocking convulsions of his victim, as he did during our late sufferings and immediate anxiety. What did he want with us? What were we here for? These questions crossed our mind, and confused and alarmed us. 'But for what purpose did you bring us here?' finally inquired Lassalle. 'We do n't know you, nor you us. You are a strange man!' 'Who I am you will soon see and hear,' replied Nathan, dryly. 'Now bring yourselves into decent appearance, so that you can come before the eyes of my family and my neighbors, without giving cause of dissatisfaction. But first to breakfast—then you shall see and hear.' With these words he left the room.

"We looked again at each other. There was something uncomfortably overbearing in this man; there was a grave determination in his manner which absolutely defied all resistance. What could we do, in his power, as we were? Nothing better than accoutre ourselves in the linen of Mrs. Strong, and the leather conveniences, jackets, and hunting-shirts of James and Godsend, and await the denouement of this eventful history.

"So we dressed ourselves in the squatter-uniform, and were completely enveloped, even to the moccasins, when Nathan entered. He led us down the stairs into the yard, and from thence some twenty steps down the hill, into a so-called well-house, where he got a basin of water, which he handed to us.' Having washed, and finished our toilet, after this patriarchal fashion, we followed him to his house, and entered the room, which was well filled."

CHAPTER VI.

SQUATTER LIFE.

"If anything was capable of producing a good impression upon the minds of the squatters, surely it was our costumes! Lassalle, stuck in a shirt, with a collar standing up at least half a foot above his ears, and which was wove of threads not quite as thick as willow-branches of a year's growth. He had on, besides, the leather 'conveniences' of James, as Nathan had somewhat paradoxically designated these breeches; at the knees they were

tied with straps. A similar waistcoat, and a calico hunting-shirt—resembling the blouses of our teamsters and villagers, only adorned more richly with fringes and ribbons—completed his attire. My uniform was a perfect copy of his; and we both resembled, to a hair, old Bartholo in the ‘Barber of Seville,’ as he appeared last winter on the boards of Caldwell’s New-Orleans Theatre—all but the accommodating dispositions of the volatile tonsor, which we certainly did not possess. In fact, our dignity was wounded, and we were really angry. Our self-love revolted at the part which the old squatter despot made us play. The remembrance of the wild chase was still fresh in our minds. We would have settled with the dry, cunning tyrant, and his disagreeable notions and everlasting calculations, in an entirely different manner, had not a certain respect—a certain beneficial threat—held us back. But, to tell the truth, the very thought of his silent, obstinate old leather-jacket puzzled and awed us. The man, with sufficient daring to enact such a spectacle in our country, could very easily, should he take a notion, play over a similar divertissement with two ragged Frenchmen, as he christened us in his *naïve* insolence. We could not afterward joke freely, at least not until we were assured a good number of miles lay between him and ourselves—then we could assume a different tone. In such a neighborhood as we were in, the good fame of Louisiana, the honor of the land, of a civilized province—the honor of our government, even our own honor, could never exist. We thought it high time to put an end to these squatter outrages.

“As I said before, it was impossible for us, even with our French disposition, to bend to circumstances—to consider the whole as any other than as an affront to us and our nation; and to suppress the indignation we felt against this squatter-*canaille* was almost impossible. With a haughtiness, which ill accorded with our leather exterior, we entered the room.

“Mrs. Strong and her daughters were busy bringing in the dishes—an immense number of small plates, covered with comfits of sugar, preserved grapes, prunes, cherries, and persimmons, as they are found in bunches in the forest, and the preserving of which, the squatters understand to perfection. Several men of different ages stood around the table, which was formed of boards of rough mahogany, and on which stood empty glasses to receive the stomach consolation. Lightly and haughtily

passing by the squatters and squatteresses, we hurried to the window, to suppress our ill humor at the sight of the delightful meadows and prairies.

“An old squatteress, who had examined us *en passant*, looked a while after us, and said to Nathan: ‘My! Nathan, is these them—these here chaps in petticoats?’ ‘I calculate they are,’ laconically replied Nathan. ‘My!’ continued the lady—‘my! what clothes these people do make! Well, now, I calculate, nevertheless, that with all this they may be elegant, and, perhaps, capital fellows. Well, that almost breaks the Union.’ ‘Pshaw!’ replied Nathan, in perfect squatter *nonchalance*—‘psaw, old woman! how you talk now! What ails the woman? I’ve a notion that old Nathan knows his people. I tell you, though they are only Frenchmen, I calculate they are as capital fellows as any decent squatter that ever settled in the bush—that’s a fact, old woman! Strangers!’ he turned toward us—‘strangers, do you want to join us? These are neighbors—Mr. Gale, from Tennessee. Come and take a morning dram, while the women are bringing in the victuals.’ ‘Thank ye,’ we replied, briefly. ‘Well, well! it is capital Monongahela, nevertheless—real, downright, elegant Monongahela. A glass of Monongahela in the morning, two glasses of Madeira in the afternoon or evening—I tell you, there is nothing better to keep the shakes down.’

“At these words, he took us by the arms. ‘Mr. Nathan!’ we said, trying in vain to escape from his iron grasp, ‘you really could do us no greater favor, than by obtaining for us a guide to the house of the nearest Acadien.’ ‘I’ve a notion that will not be necessary,’ he replied, relinquishing his hold—‘it will not be necessary, for you will soon be in the company of your Acadien. But I suspect you have rather more notions than would load a Nantucket brig.’

“The old man looked at each of us, and turned to his neighbors—who quietly talked over their affairs, while taking their ‘consolation.’ We were silent. Our ill humor had betrayed us to commit a breach of good manners, and we had consequently exposed ourselves in a way which was annoying. My attention, however, was soon drawn toward the conversation of the men, whose proud, independent bearing somewhat puzzled me. They had scarcely noticed us on our entrance, and hardly deigned to cast a glance at us now. Not a muscle moved in their apathetic features—only at their eyebrows a slight motion

could be noticed. An elderly man spoke of the commercial position of the West—of the States bordering on the Mississippi, with much reason. The observations of Nathan and his leather-jackets also betrayed a close acquaintance with the subjects on which they spoke. Not a word was mentioned about the wild frolic. ‘*Morbleu! what is this?*’ whispered Lassalle, who had been looking from the window.

“A very strange cavalcade came trotting from one of the nearest group of trees, which stood so beautifully upon the hill, stretching from the east to the west. This cavalcade rocked along in a short trot, and presented a most grotesque appearance. In front was a horseman, with a three-cornered hat and plume, dressed in the uniform of one of our French musketeer-regiments of the early times of Louis XV., with the form of a giant, judging from the figure that rode beside him. ‘*Parole d’honneur!*—this is the drummer of a regiment. *Ma foi!* a drummer on horseback!’ cried Lassalle. ‘The drummer of a regiment!’ I answered, laughing involuntarily; ‘no, not that, but a woman in a hoop-dress, on horseback.’ And so it was. Lassalle had mistaken the big, flowing hoop-dress—though we had seen hundreds of them, previous to ’89, passing through the Parisian church-doors—for a drum on horseback; but the mistake was pardonable, for it was the strangest figure imaginable. Who, anywhere but in this strange country, would have thought of mounting a horse in a hoop-dress?

“The figure approached, rocking like a schooner in rough water. We gradually distinguished the capuchin which adorned the head, and the slippers with high heels, adorning the feet. The whole reminded us of the Flying Dutchman, upon the aforesaid Caldwell’s classic stage. After these, came a troupe of about ten men, in blue coats of the so-called Lyneburgs, braquets, and mitasses—the usual dress of the Acadiens.

“We would gladly have asked Nathan about this strange cavalcade, but our pride would not allow us; and the old man seemed again to have assumed all his backwoods-obstinacy. He cast one look after another through the window, without changing a muscle of his leather face. The cavalcade had arrived before the house. The uniformed giant, in whom we easily recognized a veteran of the troupe, sent half a century ago to Louisiana and Canada, alighted from his horse, and with military gallantry helped the lady to alight

also. He was a regular Don Quixotte sort of a figure, and to use a backwood-phrase, stood at least six foot and as many inches in his stocking feet. But his Dulcinea! how quaint, how funny, how truly ludicrous, did this broad, little lady appear by the side of her long, thin cavalier, strutting and paddling along with her small feet, like a ruffled turkey-cock! With a most dignified air, she offered her hand to him, which he delicately took by the tips of the fingers, and gallanted her up the porch, and toward the room. Their companions had also alighted, but remained outside.

“We were not a little anxious to know more of this gentle couple. In a ‘*pas de minuet*’ of the most elegant style she floated, and in a regular grenadier step he marched, through the door; but not before having thrice knocked. Then, stepping forward, he touched the three-cornered hat *a la militaire*, and saluted Nathan and the company in the stiff, courteous manner of our beadles, when they and their spouses pay their submissive devoirs to his most serene excellency the baillie.

“At home, these cockney manners had often amused us, but here they were annoying; and we felt really ashamed of the old fool, who, even in this place and opposite these proud republicans, must needs continue his old-fashioned, submissive bows—which appeared like a burlesque upon our country and manners.

“Nathan, on his part, received these devoirs with the air of a man who is aware of his own authority and importance. For a moment he looked at both with a cold smile; then, with the words, ‘*Monshur Lecain, seat yourself, with your old woman,*’ he turned toward Gale, of Tennessee. Monsieur Lecain and wife thanked him with bow and curtsy, and remained standing. The lineaments of the officer’s face had become somewhat wrinkled at the words ‘*old woman,*’ but soon smoothed over again. She was, however, a most restless old woman, and, spite of wrinkles, had something so coquettish about her, that we were soon convinced that she was a Parisian. Her quick looks alternately fell upon the squatters, the dishes brought in, the busy hostess, her daughter, and lastly upon us—and there they were fixed. Our squatter costume evidently puzzled her, and her face betrayed her anxiety to know something more of us. She whispered, and pushed her old man, whose fixed stare rested upon the ‘*Mister Regwillah-tair,*’ as he styled Nathan; but her respect for the mighty squatter chief seemed to

be so great that, spite of her anxiety and curiosity, she dared not interrupt the bush-potentate. The power he had obtained over his French neighbors was really astonishing.

"I was just about to deliver our countrywoman from her painful anxiety, when Mrs. Strong, who was seated at the lower end of the table, cried, 'Won't ye set down, men?' The men nodded, and remained listening to the speech of Mr. Gale; but soon they all walked solemnly to the table.

"Nathan showed us our seats, by the side of Mr. Gale, and then turned to Monsieur and Madame Lecain. 'Monshur Lecain, have you breakfasted?' '*Mille pardons!*' exclaimed Monsieur Lecain, bowing. 'I calculate you'd better leave your compliments,' replied Nathan, dryly. 'Sit down with your old woman, and help yourself to what suits your old stomach. I've a notion, you have had a long ride, and your dry bones are not much used to it. I did not expect you so soon. Sit down, and welcome.' Lecain and his spouse still hesitated, bowing and scraping.

What, in thunder! are you bowing and scraping for, like a pair of turkeys in March?' cried Nathan, impatiently. 'I guess you can hear, and have your ears open: sit down! But stop, I calculate it would be hard for you to cast anchor with all your tackle and notions about you. You know vessels don't cast anchor with royal, top, mainsail, and all other sails up. Help her out of that canvas,' he said to Elizabeth and Mary, who were already busy about the lady, disencumbering her of part of her 'notions,' as Nathan had appropriately designated her toilet.

"These incidents, which showed—in his peculiar grumbling manner—the rough as well as mild and amiable parts of Nathan's character, did not displease us. The old man was somewhat rough, but no bad fellow, we fancied, after all.

"The breakfast consisted of pig's-feet, pickled in pepper and vinegar, corn-cakes drowned in molasses, custards, a roast turkey, venison, hams, eggs, with an immense quantity of vinegar, sugar-preserved fruit, persimmons, the delicious Louisiana cherry, prunes, and wild grapes,—which, as you know, the backwoodsmen understand so well how to preserve. As heterogeneous as these different substances were, they had all to enter the alligator-stomachs of the squatters. We saw them swallow pickled pig's-feet, with corn-cakes swimming in molasses, and red peppers in vinegar along with ham. Sometimes a squat-

ter would push his knife into a persimmon or prune comfit, put the load into his mouth, and then push the dessert-plate toward us, thinking we would do the same. Forks seemed to be entirely superfluous instruments here. Yet, overlooking these oddities, a great deal of quiet and order prevailed, which seems to be natural to the even-tempered backwoodsman. The fair sex, particularly, behaved with a grace which I had never expected to find, and which gave us a most excellent opinion of Nathan's domestic arrangements.

"The American women, of the lower and middle classes, give a dignity a grace to every motion which our ladies of the same, or even a higher grade, do not know. We were astonished at the quiet ease with which the three daughters of Mrs. Strong did the honors of the table. Female society has always, even if a man is in the worst humor, a most beneficial influence; it becomes a counterpoise—an attractive power—which, if it fails to unite him harmoniously with coarse objects, at least causes them to appear less coarse: not to mention that, in the female domestic circle you can always obtain the best and surest cue to the character of the man.

"Thus, Nathan's nationalities became somewhat elucidated by his domestic arrangements, and at every cup offered to us by the charming Elizabeth, our aversion to him seemed to lessen. We were just engaged in discussing a most excellent saddle of venison, when a sudden noise before the house caused us to stop. They were loud voices which we heard—voices which seemed familiar to our ears. We listened, heard, and no doubt remained. It was the piercing voice of Amadée, and the rough organ of Martin, which we heard at the porch. We heard our names called. The company at the table stared for a moment, and we rose and hurried to the window.

"And whom did we behold? None else but our friends Lacalle and Hauterouge, who—surrounded by Amadée, Jean, and Martin—sat upon their horses. An exclamation of surprise involuntarily escaped me. Lacalle saw me, and with a loud '*Vive le roi!—le roi ne meurt pas!*' jumped from his horse to the porch, thence with a second leap through the window into the room. I had drawn back, and he shot past me right into the arms of the fair Elizabeth, who had just risen. Pressing a kiss upon the lips of the pretty squatteress, he let her go, and flew to my embrace. 'Colonel!—can it be you? How come you here?' He retreated, then sprung toward

me again, turning a pirouette with me, and with a loud '*Vive la France, l'amour, et la patrie!*' and all this was quicker done than said.

"At the same moment, Hauterouge flies in, in the same unceremonious manner, through the window. '*Morbleu! Colonel! Lassalle! Where are you? How oddly you look! What are you doing here?*' And Hauterouge and Lacalle again, with the wild joy of war-comrades, fly to our arms—embrace us, turn, jump, bust into loud laughter, dance about the room like madmen—performing a *pas de deux* and minuet, alternately, and singing '*L'amour et la patrie!*' Meanwhile, the old boy Amadée, came in, but by the door—and after him Jean and old Martin. 'Sir count! colonel! for Heaven's sake! is it you? St. Denis and all the saints be praised! is it really you, sir count? Oh, sir count! oh, my dear colonel!' With tearful eyes the good old man kissed my hand; and, with the example of Hauterouge and Lacalle before his eyes, he also begins to jump, and dance, and sing for joy. 'We have sought you these two days, sir count, everywhere—at Martins, with the Acadiens, and upon the burning prairie. Oh, sir count! our fears, our trouble! We sought you everywhere.' 'Even at the *sous votre respect, peuple de couleur, les Allains,*' interrupted Martin. Loud laughter followed the sudden sentimental excitement. 'But do you know, colonel, that these Allains are really divine creatures?' 'You were at Allain's, then?' 'That we were; we thought to find you there, as you did not come for two days. We saw those charming girls—*parole de honneur!* they alone, are worth the journey to Louisiana!' 'This from my severe and moral judge, Lacalle?' I asked, laughing. Lacalle became scarlet, and was silent.

"At that time, amid our rejoicing, I did not particularly notice this—yet I did certainly observe it. But Amadée's joy soon changed our current of thought. Letters had arrived from home, from New-Orleans, from the governor, lieutenant-governor, from Baron Marigny, from all the distinguished persons in the province. The joy of Amadée at seeing us again knew no bounds. Had he pulled us from a pile of dead after a battle, or from the jaws of an alligator during our travels, his rejoicing could not have been more wild, than to see that we—the objects of his pleasure and trouble, affection and pain—were not lost in the horrible syren-nets of the Allains. He jumped, danced around us, cried scraps

of news into our ears; and Lacalle and Hauterouge continued their *pas de deux*, and laughed—by way of change—at our costume. It was a spectacle such as rarely, if ever, had been enacted in the room of a squatter. The squatters were not, however, visible to the glistening eyes of these intruders; and even we had entirely forgotten our amiable hosts. The *sotto voce* exclamations of 'Why that beats all nater—ay, the Union!' 'Why, they are stark staring downright mad! by the living jingo! if they ar'nt!' at last reminded us that we were not alone.

"We looked around, and—such faces! It would be impossible to describe them. If heaven had burst open, or the seven-mile long sea-serpent of the Yankees had jumped into the window, instead of Lacalle and Hauterouge, their staring could not have been more ludicrously intense. What do I say?—stare! it was real fright, absolute terror, in the faces of the women—a terror which at first appeared to us quite comical, but became serious enough when we looked upon Nathan. He sat with both hands pressed upon the table, like a man who is restraining a strong passion—but his iron features swelled, his eyes stared, and his whole physiognomy assumed a threatening aspect. Lacalle had scarcely cast a glance at him, when he shrunk back, and whispered to me: 'For Heaven's sake! who is this man?—what terrible features!' Lacalle was not the only one who had noticed the terrible expression of the old man. Hauterouge, Amadée, old Lecain, and his wife, had grouped around us; Mrs. Strong and her daughters had drawn to the side of Nathan, to calm him. 'Man! for Heaven's sake, man! only think,' cried Mrs. Strong. 'Father! for mercy's sake, father!' exclaimed the daughters.

"We were frightened in good earnest: for we saw that the liberty our friends had taken, had touched the republican squatter in a most tender point; and consequently we might have to pay for it dearly. The guests were silent; but their features looked repulsive. 'Mr. Nathan!' I cried, stepping toward him—'Mr. Strong! Pardon the liberty which our friends have taken. 'T is their surprise and joy at finding us; they did not mean to offend you, Mayor Baron Hauterouge—Captain Ducalle, De la Calle.'

"Nathan sat, with compressed lips, without uttering a word. For a moment he looked at his neighbors, then cast a searching glance at us—and suddenly shaking off wife and daughter, as a bear shakes off a swarm of bees, he rose: 'Si-

lence! old woman!" he roared; "peace to your tongue!—don't you hear? I've a notion I am master in my own house; and have not worked and bled for nothing; I calculate I will remain so, and will give you a notion that I will!"

"Saying this, he walked toward Lacalle, and putting his huge hand upon his shoulder, he said, in a tremendous voice: 'You're welcome, stranger! Welcome! I say. Silence, old woman!—Peace to your tongue, and hear what I say! I calculate it is my time to speak. I have heard and seen you, now you shall hear me!' He paused a moment. 'I've a notion,' he continued, 'that with you, it is the fashion to visit people through the windows; may be it is so—I have nothing against it. You are notoriously light-footed, ain't you?' Again a pause. Lacalle looked at the man; but neither he nor we could utter a word, from anxious expectation—for in his features, sternness, anger, and determined resolution, were all depicted. 'I've a notion,' he continued, raising his voice, 'that it is not the fashion here to jump into people's windows! it is a fact, man! It is not our fashion, I calculate; and so I expect that you will take your way back, like a good boy, who respects our manners, and come in the way the other people do—through the door.' These words might have been understood by a deaf man—for they were accompanied by a push which brought Lacalle to the window, through which—how, he knew not himself—he retreated at one leap. 'So, my good boy!—Now, close by is the proper entrance—the door. And you!' he said, turning to Hauterouge.

"Hauterouge had been looking on in blank astonishment. With all the terrible earnestness in the man's repulsive face, a ray of good-humor was still visible; so, making *bonne mine, au mauvais jeu*, he jumped in one leap after his friend. 'But now allow us to follow also,' said Lassalle and myself. 'No, no,' replied Nathan; 'you came by the right way—you are my guests—stay here. And you, monshurs,' he said to the two who stood waiting on the porch outside, 'you are welcome—but by way of the door.' '*Eh bien!*' cried Lacalle and Hauterouge, entering into the old fellow's humor. '*Eh bien! nous voila.*'

"Both laughing, entered the room again; betraying, indeed, some little embarrassment in their features—which Nathan cared very little for. 'I see something can be made of you,' he said, dryly, as a scarcely perceptible, but ironical smile played over his features. 'Look! just

look!' he continued, pointing to the astonished squatters, 'if we have light French bloods before us, who don't care a fiddlestick, you can see how others like their jokes! I've a notion for the future you had best leave such ground and lofty tumbling alone, when you enter a citizen's house. In your country this air-jumping, leaping, and mistaking windows for doors, may do very well—but they won't do here; for you might meet a mishap. Instead of dancing Frenchmen, you might be taken for dancing bears or leaping panthers, and have three-quarters of an ounce of lead sent into you, or six inches of cold iron. And of such a mistake the law could not even take notice. Such familiarities may do with you; but I calculate they are dangerous here, and had better be omitted. Pshaw! I have a sort of a notion you have an appetite, after your dancing frolic, have n't you? Old woman, clean plates!' The earnest and slightly ironical expression of Nathan's face became somewhat more friendly, and the nod he gave to Mrs. Strong put mother and daughter in motion. Peace with the bush-potentate was thus concluded.

"The faces of our two friends, during the good counsel Nathan gave them, had become somewhat elongated; but now they seemed to catch something of Nathan's character. Hauterouge looked on as if about to lead an assault at the head of his squadron, curling his mustaches, and alternately casting furious glances at Nathan and ourselves. The volatile Lacalle still seemed undecided, whether to laugh or be angry. Luckily, the lovely Miss Elizabeth had laid a fresh cover for him, and, softly blushing, pointed at it. Such an invitation he could not well resist, and accordingly he seated himself. Hauterouge still hesitated. '*Parbleu!*—what company is this we have got into?' he growled into my ear—'what bears are these? I have a great mind——' 'Do nothing,' I replied, 'you would get the worst of it. This man is an original—though, indeed, they are all alike. You see they were about to take you for a bear. Better seat yourself, I've a notion,' said I, ending with Nathan's cant phrase. Hauterouge looked at me in astonishment, made a grimace, but seated himself.

"Our good Hauterouge had already come twenty miles that morning, and consequently had as sharp an appetite as the *chef d'Escadron* of a dragoon regiment could possibly have. Lacalle also did justice to the cookery of Mrs. Strong. To Lacalle and myself, the scene appeared

highly ridiculous. The delicious, malicious sensation of pleasure we experienced at hearing our good Hauterouge receive a proper dose of squatter compliments, was delightful. You know, we Frenchmen are never so happy as when our malicious inclinations are thus unexpectedly gratified."

We nodded, and the count continued:

"But, to return to old Nathan. He seemed to be pleased with Lacalle. In fact it was impossible for any one to dislike him. His extraordinary manly beauty, united with a light, pleasing, careless manner, was sure to gain every heart. The eyes of the squatter women fairly hung upon him. Mrs. Strong had sat down by him, and looking confidently in his face, the following dialogue ensued:

"Well, I suppose you have just come over from your old country?" Lacalle nodded. 'I've a notion, things among us must seem strange to you? My!—the people do say that over there all the folks, old and young, walk in wooden shoes, and eat nothing but soup and bull-frogs?' Lacalle nodded again. 'Eat as much as you like, my boy!' she said, encouraging him—'we have plenty of notions.' Here Lacalle and Hauterouge looked up in astonishment. With great difficulty we kept from laughing, while Mrs. Strong continued: 'Well, I calculate you are not married?' Lacalle looked up again, and nodded. 'I beg your pardon, Mrs. Strong,' I replied, 'Monsieur Lacalle is married, and to the daughter of Monsieur de Morbihan.' The lips and cheeks of Mrs. Strong and her daughters fell—their faces became longer, and Miss Elizabeth drew three paces back. We could stand it no longer; but luckily old Nathan, who had eaten his ham without changing a feature, came to our relief. 'And did you come over together?' he began. 'With the colonel,' replied Lacalle, pointing at me, and continuing to masticate. 'With the colonel,' he added, emptying his mouth—and Major Lassalle, and Hauterouge. 'And you came through bayou Plaquemine?' continued Nathan, in his examination. 'How do you know that?' we replied, somewhat astonished. 'Why, how do we know that? We know more than you think; you will hear more of old Nathan yet. James!' he said, turning to one of the leather-jackets, 'I've a notion you'd better blow the horn, for a meeting of the community.' James went out and blew a large shell. The tone, which resounded through all the plantations, strongly resembled that of the Swiss Alpine horn.

"During the long pause that ensued, our two friends had finished their breakfast. Nathan rose, and turning toward us with an important face, he began: "I have a notion, it is time to attend to this business; so we will go over to the town-hall." 'I have a notion, my good Mr. Strong, that we will get out of your gear and into our own, which Amadée has taken care to bring with him,' I replied, taking up his tone. 'Then I calculate we will thank you for your hospitality, and get on our way home, with our friends and old Martin.' 'T is astonishing!' said old Nathan—'astonishing, what short-sighted people the Almighty has created in you Frenchmen! I will bet a chew of tobacco, that you have entirely forgotten what I told you about the town-hall, and the Acadiens.' Lacalle and Hauterouge laughed aloud. 'We have not forgotten, my dear Nathan. But what are we to do at your town-hall?' 'You will see and hear. Do n't make me mad with your everlasting questions.' Hauterouge looked at me. 'What have we to do with the old ruffian? He is the queerest beast I ever met with,' said he. '*Bon Dieu!*' whispered Lecain to me. '*O, ciel!*' prayed madame. '*Bon Dieu! O, ciel!* Go, go, sir count, Monsieur le Baron!' We stood still in undecision. To give more effect to their words, madame hooked her arm to mine, Lecain pushed Hauterouge from the door, Mrs. Strong took Lassalle and Lacalle, and thus we followed old Nathan. 'They are pretty queer fellows, these Frenchmen,' grumbled Mrs. Strong behind us—'they kiss single girls, though they have wives.' 'Lacalle, you might make your fortune here,' said Hauterouge. 'I've a notion you might,' replied Lassalle. Thus laughing and chatting, we walked toward the town-hall."

CHAPTER VII.

SQUATTER LIFE—THE SQUATTER ADMINISTERING SQUATTER-LAW.

"THE public-hall was at the same time a store-room. Barrels of tobacco and oil, cotton-bales, bear and deer-skins, were piled about in every part of the room. Near a pair of weighing-scales stood a rough table, and a slab lying across two blocks served as a bench—while around the table lay old luggage, clothing, and bales of goods of almost every description. We stood at the entrance, observing the squatters as they came from every quarter,

who, after surveying us with disdainful and inquisitive looks entered the room, where Nathan, Mr. Gale, and others were assembled, examining samples of the cotton and tobacco. They continued thus engaged, until the squatters had come in, to the number of about sixty, when Nathan, with another elderly man, stepped up to the table, on which he placed pens, ink, and paper; and then they both sat down—conceding to Mr. Gale the post of honor, a seat between them. Grotesque and singular as the manners of the squatters appeared, there was something in their nature so dignified, so republican, reflecting such a calm self-esteem, that we looked forward with interest to their proceedings.

"After looking around for some minutes, Nathan rose, and winked to us to step forward. We did so, when he began: 'Strangers! we have called you to this meeting, for it is, I reckon, time to let you know why we have demanded your presence. But first we have other business to attend to, and must ask you to wait patiently.' We nodded assent, though it was rather a hard request, considering our impatience; but we were obliged to make the best of it. Nathan again began, addressing the hunting-frocks and leather-jackets:

" 'It is now seven years, fellow-citizens, since we first set foot on this soil, which we have called "Asa's Colony." This is no time or place to talk about what we have done; it is, I reckon, enough to say that this colony you now look upon, with its corn, tobacco, and cotton-fields—its fences, houses, and gardens, was, on our arrival, in the very condition backwoodsmen like—that is, just as the Almighty had made it; wood and prairie, moor and thicket, bush and brake, without road or path—with no other roof than the canopy of heaven—no other light than that of the burning sun by day, and the silver moon and the glittering stars by night—no other voice than that of the croaking bull-frog, the howling wolf, the snarling bear, and the hideous yells of other wild beasts. I mention these things, fellow-citizens, not from any vain ambition, nor from a notion of having done any great and daring deeds. No! that's not my way. It's only squatter-doings that we've done. We know it; thousands have done the same thing before, and thousands will do it after us. We know, also, that your hands and axes have done the most to make the land what it now is. Yes, your hands have done it. But all this I do n't mention without a particular reason; I mention it, not to boast

of what we've done, but to recall to your minds the principles which have guided us in our actions.'

"At the word 'principle,' Hauterouge and Lacalle looked at us with surprise. The word 'principle' in the mouth of a squatter, sounded very strange. Despite all we had seen and heard, we could not suppress a smile, though the language was no longer that of a squatter—it had become earnest and dignified, yet full of egoism.

" 'During the first months of our stay here,' he continued, 'an occurrence took place, which seemed to have crushed our plans and projects in their very germ; and to have put an end, for ever, to our squatter designs. I would have given a great deal, if it had not happened; but it did happen—and a most bloody occurrence it was too, and cost us some of our best men; for never were there better men than we had, to found a settlement. It happened, too, without any seeking or provocation on our part; and we had to take it as it came. But justice was on our side—and we defended our rights like freemen. I reckon it's no time now to talk about it; we defended our rights, and that's enough. But it is time to speak about the principles which guided us—as well in defending our rights, and making for us a home, as in our intercourse with foreigners.'

"Nathan paused, and looking round over the meeting—which had now increased to upward of a hundred—continued, slowly and solemnly:

" 'Our principles have ever been, and ever will be, the principles of freemen: independence of persons and property. We will defend our independence in both, and also respect that of others. This principle has served us as a load-star—as a pilot—which has steered our bark through many bars and shoals; and will, I reckon, steer it through many more. I will speak more plainly. You know, after that bloody row, when George, Asa's brother, with our friends, arrived from Salt River, just in time to bring us aid in distress—such as squatters were never in before—and to help us build up our cabins, which had been burned down by the enemy—you know, then, for the first time, we applied this principle. We had just blocked up our houses, and had begun to cultivate our fields, when—in the summer of the second year after our arrival—the Canadians, Acadiens, and French, first appeared, intending to settle on this ground—of which, of course, at that time we had no need, but wanted it for our fellow-citizens and children. It was a delicate question, and had

to be well-considered before we could decide upon it. We had won the land with our blood; and now came those whose brothers and countrymen had fought against us, anxious to share it with us. It was a question that might have given the headache to the most sober judge, and it made our heads almost dizzy. It was a question of interest and principle—and we were, at the same time, party and judge; and as party and judge at the same time, it is difficult to be just. Some were of the opinion that the land, being our property, could not be claimed by the Acadiens and Canadians. This was certainly true; but others asserted, with no less truth, that we could defend our rights as free citizens, but this did not entitle us to restrict the rights of others. They said, also, that the States act according to these principles; and that it would be contrary to justice to oppose the Acadiens, who wanted nothing but that which we ourselves had sought—the right of settlement. “That’s quite true,” remarked another, whom you all know; “it is quite true that the States have received and admitted as citizens, foreigners, and even enemies, among them. But these States have organized governments; and besides the State governments, they have a central administration in Philadelphia, with the President and his cabinet; and these State governments, and the central administration, are provided with sufficient power to enforce obedience and respect to their laws, and their authority is acknowledged by the British, French, Spaniards, and other nations. But with us the case is different. We are on the land—that’s one fact; and have settled it—that’s another fact. Yet we are on a land not belonging to the States, but to the Spanish provinces; and in which the French and Spaniards have settled before us, and consider to be their property. Consequently, they will settle upon it; and though they may beg our consent and favor, we should not be deceived. They know well that we have not the right to refuse their request, and still less right to apply our law to them. If the Spanish government has anything against them, they will flee to us; but if we turn upon them, then will they seek the Spaniards, and bring against us the olive-colored Dons, and there will be no end of brawling and fighting.”

“Nathan paused. A tall squatter rose, and made a sign with his hand that he wished to speak. Nathan nodded assent, and the tall one began:

“‘You are right, Mr. Nathan Strong; you have been right in your prophesying.

Brawls have arisen, and will again arise. But I tell you, you were the cause of those quarrels then, and are now. Suppose the Frenchmen and Spaniards had settled this land a hundred times before us, still it would be nothing, more nor less, than the bed of our Mississippi, which we have settled and defended with our best blood, or rather with yours; for I am sorry to say, I was not present when the frolic with the Spaniards was played. I wish I had been! You had the land, according to squatter-law, by putting up your log cabins, and by sticking to your rights. Now do n’t forget, Mr. Strong, that when you defended your rights, you had not the twentieth part of the men, and good rifles, that you now have. I have nothing against the Canadians and Acadiens; but I have an idea they’ve got to be subject to the law, or else they must be made to tote off. You should have organized yourselves into a county, with sheriffs, constables, and judges, and that, I’ll bet, would have put an end to all trouble.’

“This man’s sentiments seemed to have found much favor. The cries of ‘Hear!’ ‘hear!’ and ‘That’s a fact!’ were heard from several voices. Soon a second squatter began:

“‘Had you dealt with the syndic and his gang according to squatter law, given them thirty-nine lashes, and a coat of tar and feathers, the whole matter would have been settled.’

“Now arose the man next to Nathan, on the regulator’s bench, whom we afterward learned to know and esteem, as George Nollins.

“‘There are two opinions, fellow-citizens, proposed to you here,’ said he; ‘first I will answer the one—by-and-by, we will touch upon the other. It is true, Mr. Strong and his friends have defended themselves, six against eighty-five, and maintained their rights; but they have maintained their rights, I reckon, because they were on legal ground—on the principle of independence of persons and property. They would not deprive the Spaniards of anything; neither would they suffer themselves to be deprived. But, I reckon, had we taken anything of the Spaniards, and established in their land a county, with sheriffs, constables, and judges, and the laws of the States, it would have been displaying the flag of the States on a Spanish vessel, of which we had scarce vanquished the jolly-boat; and it would have been the first step to perpetual hostilities, and a downright insult to the whole Spanish power.’

"After these words the speaker sat down. To us the debate grew every moment more interesting. Such a discussion from the mouths of squatters! We hardly trusted our ears. They were treating of nothing less than the introduction of the United States form of government into the Spanish province—in one word, the first step toward the separation of Louisiana from Spain.

"'I reckon,' began another speaker, 'the man who does not possess the courage to defend and sustain the institutions under which he grew up a citizen, is rightly served, if the Spanish and French slaves steal his horses and niggers, and laugh at him besides. I reckon Mr. Bawles is right. You should have thrashed the syndic, and tarred and feathered him, and this would have settled the whole matter.' 'I reckon he aint right, Mr. Fearnought,' replied George Nollins. 'I reckon a man who deserts his principles, and attacks the rights of others, gets only what he deserves if he is treated like an unprincipled man—like a nigger. I have an idea, that the great difference between a freemen and a nigger is this: the former acts according to principle, the latter blindly follows his instinct, like a beast.'

"George Nollins, after saying this, set down again. 'Who blindly follows his instinct?' cries Fearnought. 'I reckon we would, if we had treated the syndic according to squatter law!' retorted Nollins. 'We ought to stick to our principles, I reckon! We have maintained our rights against the Spaniards, who would drive us from the land which nobody owned at the time we found it, and which the Almighty made for us. But we should not have kept within our rights, if we had drubbed their magistrates in squatter fashion, or if we should hoist the flag of the States on their territory, by choosing sheriffs, judges, and constables—in a word, if we had introduced the government of the States.'

"Mr. Gale, from Tennessee, now arose. 'Major Gale! Major Gale!' cried several voices. The major bowed, and began:

"'Gentlemen and fellow-citizens, I beg pardon for interrupting your deliberations; but this is an important question, which is likely to cause you many difficulties, if you should not get the right view of it. I will not say my view is the right one; but it is the doctrine which prevails in the States, and among other nations. I tell you you will indeed find in the States communities having their own organizations, as the Quakers, the Shakers, and other religious sects, who choose their own officers. But

in all public affairs they are subject to the State governments and Congress, or, in a word, to the majority. They are tolerated by the government of the States as long as they subject themselves to its laws, and display no particular flag. Now you may choose your sheriffs and constables, but you must not expect them to be acknowledged by the Spaniards. Even the States would not accept the addresses of your self-chosen magistrates, any more than the Spanish government.' 'I reckon old Adams would sooner accept the addresses of the Grand Turk,' bawled out a voice; 'Washington certainly would, and so would Jefferson, too.' 'I reckon neither Washington or Jefferson would not,' replied Mr. Gale. 'I am sure they would not, fellow-citizens! You are in Louisiana, fellow-citizens—do n't forget this—where the Spaniard holds the reins of government; and not only this, but the majority also; and it would not only be against all the principles of democracy, but it would be real despotism, if you with your minority, should rule the vast majority. You may govern your own community, but you have no right to apply your law to Spain. No! you have not the right, I reckon, to organize a county government —' 'Halloo, major! what do you say?' 'Freemen have the right!' several voices exclaimed. 'I am far, fellow-citizens,' continued Major Gale, 'from prescribing to freemen in what way they shall organize their self-government; but I reckon you have not the right to introduce a county administration or a territorial government into Louisiana, because I reckon this right is vested solely in Congress—which has the right to introduce and pass a bill by which a territory is created. And to create a county, you must first be created a territory; but Congress has alone the right to create new territories.'

"These latter words seemed to have hit the nail on the head. Instantly a murmur of applause arose, like the hollow murmuring of the waves, and gradually died away. To us, as I said before, the discussion had become highly interesting. Though we did not understand half of it, yet we could see this much—that an aspiring party in the community was laboring to effect a separation of Louisiana from Spain, and that the American government had sent an agent, for the purpose of moulding the embryo-republic to their interests.

"'We thank you, Major Gale,' replied Nathan, for the first time giving Mr. Gale his full title—'we thank you the more for

your opinion, because it agrees with the principles we have ever followed in our intercourse with foreigners.'

"Here, in spite of Nathan's salmon countenance, we could not help laughing, to hear Spaniards and Frenchmen called foreigners in their own country.

"We have," continued Nathan, with a threatening look at us, 'in consideration of having, without the limits of the States, established our home, preferred to organize a government for ourselves, according to squatter law, and choose regulators!' 'You have done well, fellow-citizens,' said Major Gale, rising and sitting down again immediately. 'I reckoned,' interposed Nathan, 'I reckoned it was not best to burden ourselves with too much government luggage—such as judges, clerks, sheriffs, constables, and all that sort of thing, where cowhides would do just as well to drive off a few horse-thieves, and cow-thieves, and nigger-thieves. But it is time to speak of our relations to the Acadiens, Canadians, Spaniards, and the French. We are now about to give you an official account of our public conduct as regulators, and we entreat you to lend attentive ears.'

"The minds of the squatters had now risen to the highest pitch of excitement; a dead silence prevailed, when Nathan again commenced:

"A great deal has been said, as you know, about the admission of the foreigners into our neighborhood, and on to the land we have considered as ours; and you know that our talk resulted in the triumph of the principles of free settlement, for which we have ever contended. The Canadians and Acadiens were left at liberty to settle where they pleased, and a law was made not to interfere with their rights. To tell the truth, we would rather see them settle a house further off—we would rather they would block up their cabins some twenty-five or thirty miles distant—we would rather be citizens with those speaking the same language, and who had been raised with the same ideas of liberty, and the rights of property. We also found out the reason why they came to us. These people were lying in the woods, from December till May, and from May till December, on their lazy backs, or caressing, and dancing, and drinking, and living a wild life. They did not come for the land: to them all lands were alike, if they could only find bears and deer. They calculated to hang about us, and live on our industry. We saw all this, and did n't like it much, but we could not get rid of

'em. But it is *one thing* to live neighbor to one, and *another* to receive him into our society. We could not deny to the Acadiens the right to settle in our neighborhood, but we could refuse to receive them into our community. Here we *must* distinguish, and did distinguish.

"You are freemen, fellow-citizens," continued Nathan, drawing up to his full height—'you are freemen; and I tell you, in just pride—I can't help it, I must tell you—it fills me with pride, when I think of your conduct toward these miserable Canadians: how you not only took no part in their drunken brawls and dancing, but always showed them what it is to be citizens of the States—freemen—Americans! I am proud to say this, as it was no easy matter to keep ourselves clear of these people—who first came crawling round us, flattering and mewing like cats; and then, seeing us above such things, began to snarl at us like puppy-dogs. It was no easy matter to keep clear of these impudent, ignorant scamps—these half-savages, who have just about as much notion of the right of property as the ebony niggers. We soon had proof of this. Their eternal dancing and drinking we cared very little about, as we were far enough from them to be out of their noise and hearing; but we soon found out that we had to pay their fiddlers. One after another of our pigs had gone—and we missed 'em a good deal, as hogs at that time, you know, were very scarce. This did not suit us; so we called on some of the old men among the Acadiens, and asked 'em what all this meant. But they answered us only with motions and gestures, laughing and kicking up all sorts of antics at us. "*Ou est-ce que cela vous fait?*" they grinned; "*un cochon ou deux.*" What is that to you?—a couple of pigs, only, when you have so many? We told them it was a great deal to us, and if they should eat other people's pigs a second time, their own hams would have to pay for them. They made up faces and laughed at us; and within four weeks, the same number of pigs was missed again. You know what we did then: we appeared at one of their own frolics, seized the hog-thieves, and tied them up to one of their own door-posts, and gave each of them thirty-nine lashes on their bare backs, and such a kicking and screaming as they made, you never heard before in your life. Then there was a great fuss and noise made about insulted French honor, and satisfaction, and all that sort of thing. The authority of their government, they said,

would procure them satisfaction ; and the syndic, with his *huissiers*, really came for that purpose, and we were summoned to appear. Well, we did appear, with fifty rifles, and powder-horns, and dirk-knives, to give them satisfaction ; but the syndic, with his *huissiers*, forgot to demand it. The syndic is as cunning a Frenchman as ever lived ; so he pretended to be delighted to see us—to see that such brave citizens had settled in the land of his royal master, to cultivate the soil by their industry. He whimpered, and flattered, and fawned, and said that we had done right in flogging the Canadians and Acadiens, who were lazy, thievish vagabonds. He pretended to be so much pleased, that he promised to come and see us in our colony. We would gladly have saved him the trouble, if we could have done so ; for we saw that, Frenchman-like, he was blowing hot and cold in the same breath. But we could not refuse his visit—no freemen could do it—and we did not do it. He came, and everything pleased him exceedingly—the roads we had laid out, the saw-mill, the cotton-gin, everything pleased him well. It pleased him so well that, half a year afterward he came again, with a donation of a thousand acres in his pocket, granted to him by government. This donation was a real saddle. He had our colony on one side, and that of the Acadiens and wild Canadians on the other ; and in the flanks of both he thought to put his spurs as he pleased. We understood the trick which the Frenchman had played us, and still would play us ; but there was nothing to do against it, but to wait like men for further proceedings. We advised you to wait like men, notwithstanding there was good cause for impatience, and some of you had a notion to settle the matter at once, and to send the syndic about his business. We were not of this notion, and the majority agreed with us. We looked into the cards of the Frenchman, and saw his game, by which he meant to ruin us in the public estimation, by making out that we were a lawless set of people. But we were standing on legal ground, the right to which we had defended against the mischievous attacks of those eighty-five musketeers. The Frenchman knew this, and knew that he could not do us any harm openly ; he therefore took a secret course. Then it became our duty, as regulators, to guard against him and his secret course. The syndic built a house upon his donation, and also a store, to which a nephew of his attended—who, at the same time, was a *huissier*, and represented a sort of lieutenant.

“ Thus, you know, a year passed, during which the syndic occasionally came to look to his agent and his store, and to settle the difficulties which were constantly taking place. After a second year, the syndic built another house, and a boat for the New-Orleans trade. This was a new snare ; we saw it plainly, but said nothing. We had our own boat, which did all our business with New-Orleans, and we did not want that of the syndic. He employed a man, as captain of this boat, who played us a fine trick. You all know him—his family was an infernal brood of quadroons ; the syndic lived with one of his sisters, and a man called Vidal, with the other. Soon we experienced one of the tricks of this fine brood. Goods were lying for us in New-Orleans, and we were expecting them, but they did not come. Finally, we were informed by our commissioner, that the goods had already been forwarded ; yet we had seen nothing of the goods, though the bill of lading was in our hands in black and white. We asked young Sorrel—the syndic’s nephew—if he knew anything about them, but he shook his head, and said no. What made the matter worse, was, we could not go to New-Orleans ourselves to find out about it ; though we knew very well that a trick had been played on us. But we could not administer the cowhide to the captain, for he had been cunning enough to receive the goods from our commissioner through a third hand, so that we should not know who had played us the trick. About the same time, Joe lost his brown horse, and a week after Abi his sorrel horse. We followed the track of the thieves ; but they were old ones at their business, and had taken the horses to the Red River, about ten miles above the ferry, where the boat of the quadroom lay. The horse-thieves made us almost mad with rage, and we found it no easy thing to keep patience, and prevent an outbreak. The office of regulator was no sinecure then. Sambo, a nigger belonging to Mr. Nollins, our co-regulator—next disappeared. This was a great loss, and we now saw very well that there must be an end put to this mischief. We were almost blind about the whole matter, and did not know where to begin, so as to catch the thread which would unravel the snarl. For a long time our efforts were all in vain, but at last we discovered the thread. Our commissioner sent us word, that two of our horses had been sold in New-Orleans, by a man who answered the description of the quadroom—and that they had been sold on account

of young Sorrel. Now we had the first thread, but had to wait for others to get hold of the whole net. We soon found a second thread. At a second store, set up by the syndic on the *Côte-geleé*, we found the goods which had been sent from our commissioner—some of which were from the Manchester manufactories, and which goods were kept by nobody but our commissioner. We now found the third thread. The stolen negro had been brought to the plantation of the syndic, and from there sold to a sugar planter. Now, we had hold of threads enough, and it was time to act quickly and resolutely. We set out, and brought the syndic, and his nephew, and the second shop-keeper, to Asa's blockhouse, in order to examine them. For a long time they said "Not guilty;" but the threads were in our hands, and finally we made them confess—when they begged for their lives in the name of all the saints, and promised to restore the negro, and the goods, and everything else. The syndic gave his nephew full power, and he went with us and delivered up the goods, which we took. We also drew the nigger from the swamp to which he had escaped, because he could stand it no longer on the sugar-plantation—they treated him worse than their beasts, so he ran off to the swamp, where he had nearly starved to death. As we had got the nigger, and all the goods, except what had been sold, we now looked for the quadroon, whom we soon caught, with his boatmen, together with the Canadians and Acadiens, who had lent their hand. Thus we had the whole brood together.

"There were some of you, you know, who wanted to treat the syndic and his *huissier* according to squatter law, as well as the quadroon and his boatmen. But we, by virtue of the power you had given us as regulators, followed our own notion. I'll tell you why: The syndic, to be sure, was in our hands, and no power on earth could have hindered us from giving him the thrashing which he, as author of these infamous transactions, richly deserved; but we reckoned that it would not become us to insult the government of a country in one of its instruments, and thereby insult the country itself, and the whole nation. We thought it was more prudent to remain upon legal ground, more particularly as the Spanish government had not offended us. Therefore, we have,' slowly and solemnly continued Nathan, 'in consideration of our principle, to preserve our right and property, and not to violate the personal right of others, agreed and executed as follows:

"The quadroon, the boatmen, and the Canadians, who had personally stolen our property, we have flogged, tarred and feathered, and sent them beyond our frontier. Thus we punished the instruments; but we had other punishment for the authors of this crime. We had three meetings, at which the syndic, his nephew, and the shopkeeper, confessed their infamous acts, and gave drafts on our commissioner, for that portion of the stolen goods which had been sold. Finally—and this is the most important—the syndic gives up to us not only his boat and store, but his donation also, that they might be sold and the proceeds divided among the sufferers, to pay for their loss of time and for their trouble. Some of you then thought that the syndic should be punished according to squatter laws. But, fellow-citizens, this was not necessary—as it is not necessary to kill a bear with a cannon-ball, when a rifle-ball is just as good. 'T is not so much the death of the bear we care for, as it is his hide and flesh; and now we had got hold of the hide and flesh of the syndic, and also that of the whole brood. We have flogged the quadroon and his gang, and the Canadians and Acadiens out of the colony, so that they will never dare to come back—we have cleared the colony altogether of these vagabonds, and got their land; thus, I reckon, we have done everything that could be done by judges, sheriffs, constables, and all their train. Our doings are now laid before you; and it is for you now to say whether we have acted wisely or not—whether we have done according to duty and conscience—and whether we have abused the power you gave us.'

"A long pause followed, during which a hollow murmur rose, growing louder and louder. 'I reckon,' finally began an old backwoodsman, 'you have not gone beyond your power, but have kept within your true bounds. You have done like brave regulators.' 'Fellow-citizens,' interposed the major, 'I cannot refrain from offering you my congratulations, on the prudence and moderation with which your regulators have acted in so difficult and trying a case, and protected the property of American citizens, without offending a foreign government——' 'Without offending a foreign government?' grumbled one of the younger squatters, with a look of surprise. 'Ay, without offending a foreign government!' reiterated the major, with emphasis. 'That's my notion, fellow-citizens; and if you have before mistaken me, I am sorry for it. But I am not the man to swallow my own words. Yet it is for you to judge

whether your public servants have faithfully used their power, or whether they have gone beyond its limits. But, let me tell you, the Spanish government has not offended you, and it would be wrong in you to offend it. This I say, and I say no more.'

"A grumbling followed; and now and then an expression reached our ears which was anything but flattering to the major. They seemed to charge him with some inexcusable diplomatic duplicity. 'I reckon, major, you *are* the man to swallow your own words, if the memory of twenty men can be trusted, and if our ears played us no trick yesterday afternoon. You then said another thing,' said one of the squatters, indignantly. Nathan looked astonished at the speaker, and then at the major, who turned all colors. One of the leather-jackets then began: 'I reckon we had better let the whole affair alone, and be satisfied that we have got through this dirty business as well as we have. We ought to be satisfied; and all who choose a settled life to this eternal moving, will agree with me, when I say that Mr. Strong and Mr. Nollins have done as true regulators ought to. I know something about this regulator business, or ought to at least, as I have been here now twenty-seven years in the woods. I know something about this—and I say the syndic could not have been tarred and feathered; I say it would have been such a useless, cruel, dirty trick, that it would have been disgraceful even for Indians. I tell you, we would have been *worse* than Indians, if we had so abused the syndic; and thus, for nothing at all, have brought the whole Spanish and French people upon us. Even the people of the States would have thought us half savages!' 'I am of the same opinion,' said a second old leather-jacket, followed by a third, then a fourth; and finally by a majority; but so slow and cautious came the assent from the mouths of the backwoods-men, that they struck the ear like the first rain-drops of a storm. It was at least a quarter of an hour, before the squatters had given in their approval.

"During this interval, Nathan appeared as if he was sitting on burning coals. His lips pressed together, every pulse of his flesh trembled, and his countenance expressed the most painful anxiety. Even we felt for this iron soul, now trembling like the frightened scholar before the threatening pedagogue. We deeply felt for Nathan, though we could not but admire the moral power exercised by such apparently rough people over a man who

had acted so prominent a part, and who only wanted a wider theatre to play a part of historical greatness. This was the first time we had observed, in operation, the self-government of the republicans; and though, I must confess, this was only on a small scale, it excited our interest. In the two regulators, we seemed to see the trembling delinquents, and in the squatters, the judges—passionless, cold, and rigid—who even appeared to enjoy the pangs of the trembling Nathan. There is, in the western American, a savage harshness—a sort of Anglo-Indian severity, not particularly pleasant to those who experience its action.

"The majority had finally expressed their approbation of the conduct of the two regulators, when the old squatter resumed: 'The majority has decided, men! and a large majority it is. I, therefore, now propose a vote of thanks to Nathan Strong and to George Nollins, for the prudence, moderation, and firmness, by means of which this dirty business has been brought to a close, and the honor of our citizens and our property protected against the assaults of these foreigners.'

"Again a portentous pause ensued, during which the squatters gave in their assent, in a slow and cautious manner. Up to this moment Nathan had stood as in a dream; but now the painful anxiety of his features gave way. 'I thank you, fellow-citizens,' he said, slowly and solemnly—'I thank you, for this kind acknowledgment of our public services, which, I assure you have been indeed arduous. Yet I thank you—though *your* thanks were less freely given than we expected. It was our wish to have gained your approbation, and we have tried everything in our power, but—' Nathan paused, and, placing his hand on his forehead, so stood some moments as if in deep thought—then spoke: 'Pshaw! away with this! I reckon it is time to finish our business with these strangers.'

"Now the eyes of all the squatters were turned full upon us. Those who had been standing before us, fell back on both sides, in order that Nathan and his co-squatter might get sight of us. 'Strangers!' he began, 'I reckon it is time to proceed to your business, and keep you no longer in suspense. It is a disagreeable thing to be in suspense'—here he again passed his hand across his forehead—'I would rather fight with eighty-five Spaniards—than—especially—if one reckons to have done everything——' These abrupt and broken words betrayed some remaining pain in Nathan's bosom, and we looked on him

with compassion. He resumed: 'Will you tell us, if you please, which of you is the man called Count Vignerolles?' 'That is my name and rank,' replied I. 'Then you are a French count?' 'I am.' 'And colonel also?' 'In the regiment of Monsieur—the brother of his majesty.' 'But they have shortened your majesty of a head!' cried ten young squatters.

"Nathan interrupted them with a severe rebuke. 'They are in a free country—on our land, which is an asylum, I reckon, where any one may express his opinions freely. But I tell you, though I thank Heaven I am American-born, I regard this Frenchman none the less because he is faithfully attached to his king, and won't have anything to do with those people that sent over to us that Ginét. His king has been our most faithful ally, and he may freely express his attachment before us Americans. I trust no one will again forget his own self-respect.' These words were pronounced with such force, in a tone so reproachful, and at the same time, so commanding, that it brought the ten squatters to immediate silence. He continued: 'You arrived in——' 'New-Orleans, about two months ago, to take possession of a donation.' 'Go on, colonel,' said Nathan, encouragingly—'go on, Colonel Vignerolles, don't be afraid of telling your story as far as your travelling adventures are concerned. You are the comrades in arms of Lafayette and Rochambeau, and have nothing to fear from Americans.' 'We left New-Orleans the day after our arrival, in a boat, the master of which was a certain Balot.' Nathan nodded. 'Do you know anything about this Balot?' I asked. 'Do you know anything about this Balot?' asked Hauterouge, and Lacaille, and Lassalle, and Amadée, after me; 'Do you know anything about this scoundrel?' 'Hold, strangers! do n't interrupt the story of the colonel. You will soon learn what we know. You sailed, then, with Balot?' he asked, turning to me. 'We sailed with him up the Mississippi, and the rascal upset the boat and lost three men.' 'Three men lost?' cried several squatters at once. 'How? what? Let's hear. How was this?' 'It was on the Mississippi, men! It does not concern us,' said Nathan, sharply—'it concerns the Spaniard only. You may hear the whole story told by-and-by, if the colonel pleases to tell it.' 'We entered the bayou Plaquemine,' I continued, 'where the rascal run us on to a snag, and cleared out, leaving us, and taking with him his crew and a bale of goods.' The squatters looked at us and smiled. 'With your bale

of goods? Surely it must have had some address marked on it, and you must know its contents?' 'It had my address on it, and it contains nankins, muslins, linen, and some silk and camlet-goods.' 'Right!' said Nathan, turning to the squatters. 'Men! there can be no doubt of this stranger being the right owner. If any of you have anything to say why he should not have the goods, let him say it now.' No one spoke. 'Stranger! or rather, Colonel Vignerolles!' began Nathan again, 'as you have thus proved your title to these goods, I now deliver them to you as your property.' As he spoke these words he pointed to a bale covered with straw, on which was seated one of the squatters, and which we now recognized to be mine. 'Take your property,' continued Nathan, turning to me—who was no little surprised, as you may imagine, 'and, for the future, be more cautious how you trust yourself to strangers on a Mississippi passage. Many have there found a watery and unavenged grave, by such hands as those which rowed for you. You have judged hard, because we punished this Balot.' 'How! was it Balot whom to-day you have tarred and feathered?' I exclaimed, more and more surprised. 'Ay, it was Balot whom we punished, tarred and feathered, and afterward drove across our frontier, according to old squatter laws. We saw that you were not pleased with our squatter custom. We have no court-house, judge, or lawyers; but I reckon justice can be administered in the absence of wigs or tribunals—without which the British, before the revolution, could do nothing. You see that we administer justice without sheriffs, constables, and gallows—ay, and as effectively as in the States; and we have not even to pay fees to the lawyer. There they would have hanged him, the scoundrel—but we only gave him thirty-nine—perhaps a dozen more—we did not count so exactly. Tar and feathers, however, will soon cure his skin again.'

"Of all this, Hauterouge and Lacaille knew nothing, as you may easily imagine. All their thoughts were turned upon Balot. 'What about Balot? what is it? what was that?' asked both, impatiently. We told them, in a few words, what had happened during the morning. 'Then you have punished Balot?' they exclaimed, rejoicing at their revenge having been gratified. 'And he will have cause to remember Asa's colony for many years to come, I reckon,' said Nathan.

"The rejoicings of our two friends were extravagant. They, pushed us from the

door, and were almost crazy to hear the whole story about Balot. We had to relate it to them, and describe the operation of tarring and feathering, and told them of the wild chase. They leaped, and cried, and hooted, more than even the squatters had done. Had any one seen them, he would have thought them a troop of wild young squatters. We had quite forgotten the crowd around us, when Lecain with his wife approached, staring at us: probably they both thought queer things of us. '*Mon Dieu! Bon ciel! O, mon colonel! quel plaisir!*' Thus they *cielled* and *quel plaisir*ed for several minutes, while we knew not what they would be at. 'Who are these originals?' asked Hauterouge and Lacalle. '*Bon Dieu! O ciel! Monsieur le Comte!*' at length both burst out at once: 'The donation! the donation! it will come into the hands of the Americans! Bid for the donation!' 'Bid for the donation? what do you mean, old man?' I asked. 'To bid for the donation! become a squatter!' exclaimed Hauterouge, laughing. 'Three hundred and fifty!' now cried a stentorian voice in the ware-room, accompanied by the rap of a hammer. 'Three hundred and fifty,' repeated the auctioneer—'for a thousand acres of the best, the finest land on the Attakapas and Opelousas; watered by the Crocodile—a water-power able to drive ten mills the whole year—connected with the Attakapas and the Mississippi at all seasons—the finest sugar land—with improvements—a two-story house and a store——' 'Three hundred and fifty-one dollars,' bid a squatter. 'Three hundred and fifty-one are bid,' cried the auctioneer. 'Three hundred and fifty-one dollars, for the finest sugar land.' The thought suddenly entered my mind to purchase this land; so suddenly, so irresistibly, that the resolution was at once taken. I sprang to the door, and cried into the ware-room, 'four hundred!' 'Colonel, what are you thinking of?' cried Hauterouge and Lacalle. The squatters looked at me and stared. Nathan drew himself up, as one not trusting his own ears. But the bid was out. 'Four hundred and ten dollars!' bid Major Gale. 'Five hundred!' I cried. 'Five hundred!' echoed the auctioneer—'five hundred, bid by the French colonel!—only half-a-dollar an acre—between brothers worth two hundred! Five hundred are bid!—five hundred, once!——' 'Five hundred and fifty dollars!' bid the major. 'A thousand!' I exclaimed. The thousand operated like a thunderbolt on the squatters. Nathan stared at me with his

neck stretched out; but it seemed not to be displeasure on his countenance—on the contrary, something like satisfaction was visible in his features. 'One thousand are bid!' cried the auctioneer; 'who gives more? The finest land in all the West—free of fever—with a fine creek—the finest timber land within ten miles—excellent soil, and water communication with New-Orleans!' No answer; the thousand had intimidated all. 'One thousand, twice! splendid land! No more bids? One thousand, three—no more bids?—splendid land!—perpetual water-communication!—between brothers worth ten thousand! One thousand, three—a thousand, three—three times! The French colonel, curse him!' grumbled the auctioneer; and then crying aloud—'the French colonel is the owner of the land—provided he can pay for it.' 'There is no doubt about his ability,' said Lecain, now pushing forward; 'there is no doubt about it, gentlemen. You will get a lord for a neighbor, whom the governor and lieutenant-governor have honored with their own handwritings, and who is a grand seigneur—a "mylor," as you say—and who is——' The good Lecain shrugged, and stopped in his speech—for the sour looks of some, and the contemptuous smile of others, convinced the good man that his eloquence had made an evil impression. Without a word, they turned their backs upon him. 'Pardon, men!' I began, seeing the urgent necessity of saying something to remove the bad impression my comrade's remarks had made. 'Pardon us, men! I hope we will be satisfied with each other; and I congratulate myself, that I have got for neighbors such steady men—men whose conduct is governed by principle!' 'I wish it—I hope it,' replied Nathan, dryly. 'It will be well for you to be a good neighbor; and hard for you—depend upon it—to be a bad one. We shall stand by our rights. We give you the same rights we have—nothing more or less. To be sure, we would rather you would build your cabin a house further off; it might be better for us, and better for you. But you shall enjoy all your rights, if you insist on remaining, and not one iota more; and neither governor nor lieutenant governor can give you more, depend upon it.' With these words, he turned away from us, and we hastened to reach the open air.

CHAPTER VIII.

SQUATTER LIFE—A SQUATTER'S NOTION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

"HAUTEROUGE and Lacalle burst into a loud laugh, as soon as we were out of the public hall. 'A speech so conclusive—so significant! Surely, the man was born a governor!' exclaimed Hauterouge, laughing. 'They are, indeed, polished and amiable people,' said Lassalle. 'A fair prospect of an agreeable neighborhood, Vignerolles!' said Hauterouge. 'Yes; and by way of variety, the pleasure of being tarred and feathered!' added Lassalle. 'And thirty-nine into the bargain,' said I; and again we all burst into a loud laugh. Yet, in spite of my laughter, I felt almost angry at the savage roughness of this backwoodsman; as I had, before my friends, commended him in terms which seemed to them—particularly to Lassalle—not a little extravagant, and which contrasted strangely with the aversion I had a few hours before expressed. But his speeches in the meeting, and the ability with which he had justified his conduct before the quarrelsome squatters, had the effect of portraying the greatness of his spirit before my eye, in colors so glittering, that my sanguine disposition was completely blinded.

"But now it seemed to me time to exhibit more spirit, and to give a more dignified and imposing air to the hitherto poor part we had played, and still played, against that iron head. When we were lost adventurers in the wilderness, we found it necessary to submit to the rude language of the squatters; but now appearing as French soldiers, and surrounded by our servants and a whole suite of Acadiens, I thought it proper—as we were really at home—to assume another tone; knowing full well, that a more determined air would show Nathan and his family that we were not to be trifled with in our country. Besides, the interest and the honor of our country demanded it; for in the Attakapas we had already heard of the intrigues of the American government to gain a foothold in Louisiana, and of secret agents scouring the country, throughout the western Spanish provinces, in every direction. Several of the agents—and among them a certain Seigneur Stille—were mentioned by name. Expeditions had gone to Missouri, and up Red River. For my part, I had no doubt the major was one of these secret agents—and that he was selected to lead the various bands of Americans smuggled across the frontier, in accord-

ance with the secret plans of his government. Yet there was no doubt that watchful prudence, combined with firmness and military experience, and supported by the authority of the government, could do much to prevent the execution of these plots. I recalled to the recollection of my friends, the reasons which had partly induced me to purchase the land at the public sale. They understood the danger, and accorded with me in my views. We now agreed instantly to leave the colony, to hasten home, and thence to repair to the capital, where I might obtain an interview with the governor, and determine on further measures. Accordingly we returned to Nathan's blockhouse.

"In the meantime, during the meeting, Joe had taken our horses into the stable, and we now ordered Amadeé to let them eat while we were putting off our squatter-dress and preparing to depart. In an hour we were ready. Two pieces of merino—which I had bought for my summer-dress—I took out of my pack as presents for the Misses Elizabeth and Mary, by way of a set-off to the condemned petticoats. As we reached the porch leading to the room, we met Nathan and the major just leaving the meeting. The old man seemed not to observe us; but the major no sooner got sight of us than he hastened toward us, with a politeness which contrasted strangely with his former stiff, rough manners. His appearance, before rude and careless, was now decided and military. He approached us with a slight bow, at the same time expressing great pleasure to make the acquaintance of such distinguished officers. We of course returned the compliment, though not with our usual warmth. He seemed to observe this, and expressed his regret at not having found out our incognito on first meeting with us. This would have prevented any mistrust of our rank—a mistrust very natural in a land, where every barber or grocer from *la belle France*, pretends to have left behind some office at the court, or some title of nobility. Hauterouge dryly remarked: 'Playing the incognito has all at once become fashionable. Some assume to be none, others less than what they are.' The major manifested some surprise, when I—in order to turn the conversation, which seemed likely to lead to disagreeable explanations—regretted that we were no longer able to enjoy the honor of his company, as we were just about to depart. Then turning to Nathan, I said, 'It is now time to thank you for the hospitality we have enjoyed at your hands, and to think of our return.'

'You are welcome to stay; but if you prefer going, we can't keep you,' replied Nathan. 'The manner in which you have generally treated us,' I continued, in a somewhat more formal tone, 'deserves our grateful acknowledgments, and proves you to be a man of principle. Persevere in this course, and if—as I expect—we shall meet again, I hope it will be with friendly feelings.' 'I hope so too,' replied Nathan, in a subdued tone—'I hope so; though, to tell the truth, I calculate you had better move a house further. But I have owned that principle; and, although it may be of disagreeable consequences to us, it will prove advantageous to you.' 'What do you mean by this?' I inquired.

"I thoroughly understood his meaning, but was desirous that he should explain himself fully. 'With your purchase there,' said he, 'you have played us a fine trick—a real French trick. But you are right—you have the same right to purchase that we have; though I do n't fairly understand what will be the end of it.' 'Relative to this purchase,' I replied, 'I would ask whether, in the meanwhile, you will take—as security—this bale of goods, which cost at the manufacturer's a thousand livres, and is here worth full five thousand?' 'You may draw me a bill of exchange, and leave the goods as security in case your draft should not be accepted,' replied Nathan, very coolly. 'Well, be it so—I will draw on your commissioner; and I hope when I return to find the money in your hands, and in yourself a good neighbor.' 'That depends on you—though a neighborhood to your countrymen has, until now, not been of the pleasantest character. But this is your right; and your rights you shall have, provided we are not disturbed in ours. We've got rid of a troublesome customer, who was a spy, and hope not——' Nathan paused. 'Hope not,' I interposed, 'to receive a worse one in his place. Is not that what you were about to say, Nathan?' Nathan gave me a look, half assent and half denial. Hauterouge and Lacalle begin to grow impatient. 'I won't say that, colonel,' replied Nathan; 'but I will say, we do n't wish to quarrel with you.' 'We will be sincere, Mr. Strong—sincere as men can be,' said I, endeavoring to imitate his language. 'You see before you men of standing—men who, on bare suspicion of what your looks just now betrayed, would—to use your own words—stick the spurs into your flanks. I have ten years faithfully served my king, but never in the manner to which you have alluded. My standing and rank

forbid my acting such a part. It might be well enough for a syndic, but can hardly be expected from a cavalier and a colonel. But I should think myself more unloyal still, to pass over in silence, several plans and projects, should they once be put in motion, which the ears of loyal men—at least in Louisiana, I calculate—should never hear.' 'What plans and projects do you mean?' inquired Nathan, with a good deal of anxiety. 'I should think they needed not to be pointed out,' interrupted Hauterouge, vehemently; 'for they betray themselves, in all your words, too plainly to be unheeded by loyal ears.' 'Ah! we are Americans,' replied Nathan, smiling—'we are Americans, whose public spirit must give vent to itself. I understand now, what you mean.' These words were addressed to Hauterouge. Turning to the major, Nathan continued: 'I can answer for these men. They are brave boys, who would as soon attack a whole regiment of Dons as to go on a bear-hunting—yet they would be crazy if they looked for the least help from above. But fortunately they know him there above, through and through; and know, too, that if he could shove all the slave-holding States down to Cape Horn, he would rather do it to-day than to-morrow. They know he hates all the country below Mason's and Dixon's line. I tell you, major! I tell you if old Johnny could, with his Yankees, cut clear of the people south of Mason's and Dixon's line, and tack on to old England, he would do it—and, with his Hamiltons and federalists, reign amid the loudest hurrahs!'

"The major stood with his arms crossed, neither assenting nor denying. He seemed absorbed in thought. We were boiling over with rage at the unparalleled impudence of the man who had dared to tell us, in plain words, to our very faces, what we had hitherto hesitated even to insinuate. It was with difficulty that I could restrain Hauterouge from committing some act of violence. With a tone of rebuke I replied: 'But you know, Mr. Strong, that language so improper and seditious may bring you into danger, if not into the Mexican mines.' Nathan did not reply, but turning to the major, said: 'But it is fortunate that he alone there has lost all his revolutionary-fever, and likes his lords and tories better than plain, sound democrats.' Suddenly turning to me, he says: 'You talk as a Frenchman can and dares, colonel—and for this reason I am not displeased with you. You are no American—no citizen; you are a Frenchman, and know

no better than to speak as you do, walled in as you are in the Bastille of your prejudices and narrow notions.' 'Mr. Strong,' I replied, with more vehemence, 'take care! This language is treason to the country that tolerates you, and we—as liege subjects of his Catholic majesty—dare hear it no longer. As men, under some obligations to you for your hospitality, we advise you to adopt another tone.' 'Enough, stranger,' said Nathan, with a haughty air. 'Do n't arrogate too much to yourselves! You are Frenchmen, who must always be kept under a curve-bit, lest you cut some mad pranks. Do n't arrogate too much to yourselves, colonel! We allow you to speak your own opinions, as we are the masters on our own ground and bottom; but you must not, therefore, think you are the masters. Yes, we allow you free fields with us, because it will do us no hurt, and you can make from us no converts to your opinions. But, understand me right! We are not the men who want, or ask, or have asked, the favor of the Spaniards, or any other power on earth. We are standing on our own feet, in our own shoes, and your governors, and your rulers know this well. But I will tell all four of you something—and mark it, for it may kindle a new light in your minds. You have been officers in the king's army, and courtiers, and barons, and counts; but I tell you, you have got to learn much yet, before you have served your time out. You are Frenchmen, playing a variation, or perhaps the same game which Ginot played above with the Bostonians. Well, the Bostonians let him have the game a short time all to himself—just as they did the British; when Father Washington—whom may Heaven bless, and long preserve!—brought out a rail, and rode Ginot out of the country. A short war was kicked up about that, but your rulers soon got tired of it. Now hear me: I see you are Frenchmen, and think, perhaps, we are such republicans as you have in your own country—who, instead of governing themselves, plunge into the leading-strings of the first street-tyrant they may meet—mad fellows, who, on the word of a barefoot-scoundrel, fire into their neighbors, and then hurrah, like mischievous boys robbing and plundering. You think we are made of similar stuff, I calculate—that we are insane, marching out with a hundred and twenty rifles to conquer a whole country. I tell you it's madness, perfect madness, to think of making a country free against its will, and to elevate a crowd of slaves, sunk in sloth and

vice, to the condition of citizens, able to govern themselves. That's not our notion! Our notion is this, I will tell you: our doings will certainly join Louisiana to the Union—a destiny for which Heaven has intended it.'

"If you mean that you can ever succeed in alienating the affections of the people of Louisiana to their God, then I charge your rash prediction with impiety toward a Being, whose name you have profaned in connection with your villainous schemes,' I replied, with some warmth. 'Enough, man!' coldly returned Nathan—'enough, man! There's no use in being angry; you cannot stop the course of fate. But I'll tell you—I'll bet you all I'm worth, here in the presence of the major, that in less than ten years Louisiana will belong to the Americans.' We shook our heads indignantly, but let the old man go on. 'Do you believe that the citizens above—for whom the thirteen States are too small, and who break out on all sides, over the Alleghanies, up the lakes, down to the Spanish Floridas, down to your Louisiana—who almost every year found a new State, and who have already settled by hundreds of thousands in the Mississippi valley—do you think that these citizens—that the Kentuckians, the Tennesseans, the people of the Northwestern Territory, and of the Old Dominion, will sit still with their hands folded, if their eyes only once get sight of a land on which their hearts are set; and which produces abundantly sugar, cotton, rice, and the glorious old Virginia-weed, instead of buckwheat, and meagre spawn? Do you think they will let their own Mississippi—rising on their own ground and bottom, out of their own lakes, and washing their own banks for thousands of miles—do you think they will let this noble stream be closed and barricaded by your lazy custom-house officers, and thus let their flour be soured, their hams be destroyed by worms, and leave the key of the whole country in your hands? I tell you, if you think this you are mistaken. Your government may fancy it has a right to shut up the Mississippi, and confine its trade. You may build your dams across the Mississippi—they will, in a jif, be cut up like as if they were straw. This is not the voice of a single man, but of hundreds of thousands!' 'The Spanish government will know how to defend its rights against your aggressions, be sure of that!' said I. 'As long as she is able to do so, no doubt,' interrupted Nathan. 'But how long she will be able is another question—and still an-

other is, how long she wants to be able. We don't care to fight much for what is of no use to us; and Louisiana is not the country to be of use to the Spaniards. No! Louisiana requires from Spain every year two hundred thousand dollars; and if there was not the Spanish pride, hugging its titles and possessions, as a beggar does his rags, Louisiana would long since have been ours.'

"Hauterouge turned red as fire with anger, and we could hardly restrain him from a violent outbreak against Nathan; who, with a cool smile, surveyed our ardent friend from top to toe. 'You seem to be intimately acquainted with the princes of the country,' I remarked, not a little indignant at the coolness of the man. 'I reckon I am; and just because we know the country, is the reason we wait so patiently. Why hurry? for sooner or later Louisiana must be ours.' This language was truly revolting to a Frenchman's feelings, and I could hardly keep in my anger. 'You speak very positively, Mr. Strong.' 'As positively as one has a right to speak who understands the matter,' replied Nathan, very coolly. 'Have you ever noticed the seed-corn, when planted in the fertile earth? never seen how, when sunk several inches deep into the ground, it is covered with a clod which, a hundred times heavier than that little seed-corn, might seem to crush it to atoms? But does it do so? Is it able to choke, to crush, that little seed-corn? No! the little thing easily sprouts up, and shoots forth to the daylight, triumphant over that dead, heavy clod. Have you never seen this? I will tell you: we are the little seed-corn—Louisiana the fertile earth—and the Spanish government that dead-clod weight, pressing on the sprouting seed, the growth of which it would like to stop if it could. But it can't: there are too many strong leaves, and these leaves will pry away your dead-clod—the weight of your government—as lightly, you know not how lightly, and Louisiana will sprout up, and grow, and flourish, and we with it.'

"The man was born a preacher, or a parliamentary speaker. His eloquence, like the vigorous streams of his country, was bold, free, boundless—carrying all before it. My design of imposing on him was gone. To this plain declaration of war, I knew not how to oppose a word. Yes, I must assent to him, from the bottom of my heart. 'Mr. Strong, without contending further with you, I would only draw your attention——' 'Let that be,' he interrupted; 'I know what you would say. Not

you—not I—can stop the fate destined for Louisiana by Him who, beyond the stars, wields alike the destiny of men and nations. Not you—not I—can change the decrees of fate! But it is permitted to us, feeble mortals, to see, and to foresee, the course of fate, more or less, as our minds are more or less confined by prejudices, or weakened by vices and follies. I tell you, it is good to know the course of fate—to watch the stream of time. Had that king, to whom you are so faithfully attached, possessed the sound views of Nathan Strong, he had still been king. But you are a Frenchman, and I have no desire to convert you to my opinion. I would not have mentioned them, or spoken a word about this matter, had you not begun it. As it is, it is well. It is ever my duty to tell my opinion, and declare it openly, as becomes a free-born citizen of the States, who, even in Louisiana, may freely speak his mind, because he can maintain his rights. But come, it is noon, and dinner is ready.' 'Mr. Strong, I must leave. My friends, you see, are impatient.' 'Do as you please. I thought you wanted to make the acquaintance of your new neighbors, and of the land you have bought. I thought you would like this; and supposed it would be the best thing you could do. You are welcome to stay; but you can do as you please—only I reckon you will have to wait long for a second invitation. I am sure of your friendship, but——'

"Hauterouge and Lacalle stood aside, passionately contending that for no price would they remain with this old villain. I found myself in no little embarrassment. To leave, would offend a man who had become important to me, and whose advice and assistance was indispensable to the success of my plans. If I remained, I violated my faith with two well-tried friends. In this dilemma Jean appeared, telling me that our two horses were wearied out with the exertion of the previous day, and that it would be quite impossible to ride home. 'Well!' exclaimed Hauterouge and Lacalle, 'then we will go to some Acadiens. Better to stay in the poorest hut, than remain here a moment longer!' I remonstrated. 'Nathan,' I said, 'had been provoked to the discussion by me; and we had no right to condemn him for expressing his opinions.' 'What!' cried Lacalle; 'what, colonel! you defend the principles of this rebel—this barbarian?' Nathan, although partially understanding our conversation, changed not his mien in a single thing—when the major spoke: 'Pardon, young man—pardon me, if I interrupt you.

The sentiments expressed by Mr. Nathan are the sentiments which millions of Americans profess with pride, and among those Major Henry Gale.' 'And with which we will have nothing to do, and which we will oppose and combat to the last!' interposed Hauterouge. 'That's your business, mon-sieurs. You are at liberty to tell what you have heard in New-Orleans, in the Attakapas, or anywhere else. Your government knows our opinion—we make no secret of it——' I endeavored to interfere; but Nathan broke in on my words. 'Enough, strangers! I reckon we won't learn from you, who do n't know the first principles of good behavior in the house of a citizen, but like fools jump through the windows into the midst of the family and guests. Learn from you lessons of civility and good manners! I tell you, I stand here upon my own ground and bottom, and here I *will* stand, until a stronger power than yours shall drive me away. I declare my opinion, before Heaven and the world, and your government. You may tell, again and again, what you have heard and seen; you may go as far as you please—for I reckon you are not the man with whom I would like to live long.' Lacalle foamed with anger, as I had never seen before. 'I see that the old regulator is about to add our colonel to the number of his protégés,' cried Hauterouge, tearing himself away. These were his last words; for, without noticing our remonstrances, our hot-headed friends leaped upon their horses, and galloped out of sight. Nathan remained quiet, and coolly took leave of Martin and the Acadiens, who also hastened off. 'Their heads will soon become easier, if they turn in with the Acadiens,' grumbled the old man; 'a single night's lodging will cure them. They are forty-five miles from home, ignorant of the country and byways, and will soon learn what it is to leave the hospitality of an American for that of an Acadien. You have done well to stay here,' he said, turning toward us; 'welcome! welcome! I perceive, from your spirit, that you are a man who has seen the world. I like to be with such a man.' 'You have done well to stay, colonel and major,' said Major Gale, seizing our hands; 'you see what it is to have gained the friendship of such a man as Mr. Strong.'

"Altogether, I was rejoiced that I had remained, and that Hauterouge and Lacalle were gone; for I disliked the Attakapan—disliked him from the bottom of my heart; and the impetuous loyalty of my dear Hauterouge had been a constant bone of contention. Here, I felt, was the scene where

my strength could develop itself; though I wished our friends had taken their leave in a manner less abrupt.

CHAPTER IX.

SQUATTER LIFE.

"FROM the moment we concluded to remain, the rough rind of Nathan's character began to peel off, and our relations to each other grew more and more friendly; a certain charming calm succeeded a but half-concealed distrust, and a more unconstrained manner took place of sharp collision. 'Tis true, our relation to each other was still far from our French *empressement*; but, on the other hand, it had the pleasant character of being equally removed from a vulgar familiarity. Thus, there was a constant kindness of disposition founded on mutual esteem. And in regard to social life, I must confess, that whenever I, as a European, during my intercourse with Americans, became disagreeably affected by their apathy and rudeness, my feelings were also improved by that native tact which even the most common American possesses—that indifferent, genteel *nonchalance*, which sets the stranger at ease with himself. I came, afterward, into a thousand various connections with Americans, (I may now just as well say my own countrymen,) on all occasions, in hotels and taverns, on the highways and on steamboats, in companies of fashionable as well as common life; yet seldom was I molested by that nonsense so universal in Europe. In the United States you can adopt as a rule, that so long as you act like a gentleman, you are treated as such.

"But, to return to Nathan. After dinner, he proposed that, in company with the major, we should make an excursion over the colony, and offered us horses, and his man Joshua to attend us. For his part, he said he was compelled to remain at home to attend to the assorting of tobacco, for cultivating an excellent quality of which he had obtained a high reputation; at the same time saying, he was happy that we had an opportunity of judging of the colony from our own observations. To this proposal we of course had no objection, and accordingly mounted our horses—which were three Mexican curly-heads, that had only a short time before been caught wild on the premises of Texas, and consequently put in requisition all our skill in horsemanship. The youngest son of Joshua, only fourteen years of age, was our guide.

Hitherto our thoughts had run on anything but the colony, and now for the first time, we cast scrutinizing glances at the scene around us, desirous of learning, with our own eyes, what mighty works these Americans had accomplished, to warrant them in the assumption of such an imperturbable self-sufficiency. The colony, as I before said, extended from southeast to northwest, along the summit of a ridge about fifteen miles in length, rising about seventy feet from the river on the southern side, and gradually sloping away to the prairie on the north. On the level summit of this ridge were situated the plantations of the wealthier members of the society; and a more beautiful, or more favorable settlement, you could not imagine. One one side lay what is called clearing lands, from which the primitive forest had just been removed—on the other, immense prairies, with the tall grass waved about the heads of the browsing cattle and horses, who were pushing and tumbling against each other like rolling stones; the sound of tinkling cow-bells came to our ears on the gentle breeze; and in the far blue distance, a thick fog was seen glimmering in the sunbeams through every opening of a vast forest. The whole scene was buried in the profoundest silence—save only the tinkling cow-bells, and occasionally the heavy blast of the sea-shell, calling the workmen home from the fields. There was something charming and irresistible in the landscape. We paused, and after having contemplated the magnificent scene for several minutes in silence, we gave the reins to our horses, and were soon out of sight of Nathan's blockhouse. We passed him and his family, together with half-a-dozen negroes, at work in a tobacco-field, and farther on still, we passed a field of remarkably fine corn. A dense cloud of smoke waved over a third field, with here and there a gigantic trunk stripped of its leaves and bark, which, though killed by girdling seven years before, still stretched its wide branches to the winds, as if imploring pity for its desolated condition. On other parts of the field, these trees had been felled; and, being covered with dry cotton-stalks, were set on fire, from which rose huge volumes of smoke. Here, these once magnificent trees—the best adapted for ship-timber of any in the world—were burned solely for their ashes. In France, a single one of these trunks would have sold for a thousand livres.

"We had proceeded about half a mile in a southeast direction, when the top of a log-cabin—which seemed to hide itself

behind a group of magnolias and catalpas—announced another and a larger plantation. On the right lay the primitive forest, the trunks of whose enormous trees were so thickly intertwined with the cianco and wild-vine, that, notwithstanding the hot noonday sun was flaming, no ray of light could penetrate its gloomy darkness. At the sight of this primitive forest, we could, in the language of Nathan, form some notion of the vast labor it must have cost to clear away these inhospitable woods. With these reflections, we approached the log-cabin, which was smaller than that of Nathan's, though built in the same manner—of logs, covered with rude slabs, rough, and in strange contrast with the beautiful and blooming magnolias, and several magnificent oaks—to the backwoodsman a fitting abode, but repulsive by its rudeness. It had not the filthy appearance of the Acadian huts, and was also far removed from those comparatively elegant villas we had seen on the Attakapas, the exterior of which were pleasing to the eye, although there was much within to offend the taste. The dwellings on the Attakapas, with their projecting roofs, slender pillars, and green blinds, were quite attractive, particularly in comparison with these rude American log-cabins, stretched out like frogs on all fours.

"We passed along one side of the forest, and saw before us a magnificent picture, rendered more beautiful by the incomparable frame in which it was set. It was a landscape, about a thousand yards square, sloping toward the river, from which it was guarded by a range of trees, still left standing; at our feet extended a small field of ripe cotton, the whitened tops of which presented the appearance of a sheet of snow suspended in the air; a beautiful green plat rested on the ground beneath; while on either side of the picture stretched the gigantic forest. The landscape itself presented a lovely scene of luxuriant vegetation, surpassing anything we had ever before seen. We passed on. Adjoining the cotton-field was a smaller one, planted with tobacco. We dismounted and stepped toward the log-cabin. It was deserted. Near the door were hung farming utensils; ploughs, axes and hatchets were lying on the ground. We entered. The furniture—consisting of rude tables, benches and chairs—contrasted strangely with the richness and abundance of the fields. I could not refrain from asking, how it was thus possible for man, with all his wealth, to be content with such a miserable habitation? The major replied, that the Ameri-

can first thinks of the necessities of life, and then of the comforts.'

"And thus, indeed, we found it. A further examination of the place disclosed to us the mystery mentioned in the words of Nathan. Here we could behold what the sinewy arms and active hands of the backwoodsmen had done, to prepare the way for the future growth and prosperity of the country. A Creole would have consumed the profits of the first crop, in ornamenting his dwelling and decorating his person; thus giving to everything an improved outside air, which could not correspond with the reality within. Not so with the squatter. All was artless, uncivilized and rude—yet naturally and poetically rude.

"It was easy to see that the owner of this plantation had but one idea; and this he had pursued, step after step, with a perseverance and soberness, almost unknown to us Frenchmen. I believe I have mentioned, that the idea of establishing ourselves had long been entertained with our family at home. From the time when our affairs had begun to take a desperate turn, this idea became uppermost in our minds—it was the sheet-anchor to which we had clung amid the wreck of our party—the favorite theme of our conversation—the radiant sun of our hope, with which our future family existence had become blended. With the wreck of our fortune, as little as it was competent to support us agreeably to our rank at home, here it was amply sufficient to gratify every wish of the heart—here I could prepare a home for my betrothed, far from the injuries and storms of the European world. If the French, the Spanish, and the Germans, with far less means, had succeeded in this country, and placed themselves on an equality with the wealthiest in the land, surely I could do the same. I was yet young; educated, active and enterprising, actuated by faith and love, and feeling a world of power within me. Nothing was wanting but a little instruction—a tutor, to set me immediately to work. How, and in what manner could this be done? This was the sole question, and it was an important one. I knew nothing about agriculture, except so far as it had been necessary to tenants, and stewards, or rather to receive the rents they handed over to us. I could purchase a plantation, and manage it by means of agents; but even if I had capital enough for this, I knew none of the planters, and must be dependent on my own household; and to venture all on the cast of this die, which in the first year

might ruin me, would have been downright insanity.

"Of all this, I had my first glimpses during my intercourse with the Creoles on the Attakapas, where all my beautiful dreams vanished like soap-bubbles. This rendered the last weeks of my abode on the Attakapas almost unendurable. With a feverish restlessness, I wandered in search of what I could not find, and which I even knew not how to name. But in Nathan I had found the man who could teach me. Yet in company with him I saw nothing of his plantation, which was conducted in a superior manner; besides, my thoughts were bent on other things. Here, on this second plantation, I found the thing I had so long searched for in vain elsewhere—the guide capable of conducting me to the desired goal—a sort of A B C—the spelling-book and dictionary, which first set me to learning that difficult art of getting along among the backwoodsmen; and in which it was necessary for me to proceed as gradually and as systematically as little children, in learning to read and write. Here I did not need even the hints of the major. I found the rudiments—the A B C of squatter life—in the clearings, in the woodland, and in the live-oaks; the spelling-book in the cultivated fields, in the rude and artless dwellings, in the rough furniture, made by the backwoodsman himself, in the horses, and in the corn-stubbles. I saw plainly that I had only to do as the squatters had done, to accomplish the same ends. Full of ardor to begin my work immediately, and moved with anxiety, I hastened from the room to the stables, to the gardens, to the fresh land and cultivated fields, like a pedant who has hit upon a new reading of some passage in the classics, or who has discovered an ancient manuscript, and who forgets food, drink, sleep, and everything. He, only, who has to solve the difficult problem of 'getting along in the backwoods,' as they term it, can form an idea of the childish haste with which I pounced on every new object. To me it was an embryo plantation. The log-house had irresistible charms; I was in ecstasy at the thought of the time when my beloved family, in their plain and simple robes, should come to meet me at the cabin-door as I returned from the field.

"The major had accompanied us in all our excursions to the fields, to the stables, and other places, giving explanations, approving and disapproving, and commenting on the various modes of planting. He told us we should have great advantage in laying hold ourselves, and in being active on

our plantation, without detracting at all from our characters as officers in the eyes of the people. I replied: 'This activity will have for me the greatest charm, as I am tired with a lazy life on the Attakapas—though I have tried it but a short time.' 'You will meet with several educated families in this colony,' said he, 'provided you have brought nothing from the Attakapas which will cause the doors to be locked against you.' This remark excited our surprise. 'The doors locked against us?' I asked. 'You will find,' replied the major, 'that the Americans in this part are very sensible people. I wished—But here we are in a new plantation!' We had now reached another plantation, and observed the same active, enterprising spirit, and the same simplicity. I already fancied myself in a leather-jacket.

"On this last plantation we found the people at home. It belonged to Mr. Fearnought; who, with his family, was just sitting down to a dinner, consisting of an enormous dish of homminy, flanked with another one of ham, and for dessert, a huge basket full of green-corn, which, eaten with butter and salt, afterward became quite a favorite dish with me. For drink they had milk, in tin cups. But the manner in which we were received, dampened our expectations a good deal. If I had then been asked what I thought struck me most disagreeably of the Americans, I should have answered, their coldness toward strangers—an offensive moroseness, an apathy, which betrays an absolute want of good feeling, if not malice prepense. Yet such an opinion would have been unjust; for the American of the West is, on the whole, far more cordial in his disposition than the American of the East. The backwoodsman does not yield to any one in warmth of feeling, and genuine politeness. But, accustomed to the gay welcome of our countrymen, and the hearty squeeze of the hand by the impetuous Creole, the contrast, at first, struck us unfavorably. Neither Fearnought nor one of his family stirred an inch on our entrance; but, casting at us a lazy look of indifference, rapidly plied the spoon between their mouths and their favorite dish. Even the female part of the group, so ready at other times to cast attentive glances toward a well-bred stranger, turned their eyes very coolly, and—as it seemed to me—very reluctantly toward us. Although accustomed to a good degree of self-control, it was not possible for me to follow the example of the major—who, taking a seat, began the conversation. I remained standing, without any one offering me a

word, until I could stand it no longer, and finally took my departure without speaking. The major remained.

"What abominable, rude, inaccessible beings!" I exclaimed, as soon as the major joined me again. 'You may be right; but this rough inaccessibleness has its reasons—good reasons—founded on a strictly moral feeling.' I looked at the major—his tone of voice was as dry as his tongue: he appeared, since having been into that house, some degrees colder than before. 'Major, you couple the rude inaccessibleness of these backwoodsmen very strangely with their moral feelings.' 'But I see nothing wrong in it, if persons, jealous of the purity of their community, do not rush with open arms to receive strangers whose principles are not in accordance with their own.' At these words the major stared at me. 'What principles do you mean?' asked I, at the same time reining in my horse until he stood still. 'The principles upon which every civil community, whether large or small, is founded; the sanctity of property and the marriage tie—' 'But I hope you and your backwoodsmen do not think us Balot or Vidal?' exclaimed Lassalle, impetuously. 'I take you to be gentlemen, sirs,' replied the major, to the baron—'gentlemen, such as I have known all the French field-officers to be, without exception, with whom I have had the honor to be acquainted.' 'But, notwithstanding you think us to be gentlemen, you think that our principles would not promote the moral purity of your community?' 'My own opinion is out of the question, as the matter does not concern me.' 'But it should concern you,' I replied, as I wished to procure from him something more definite. 'If I were concerned, I should certainly think it my duty to prevent any scandalous conduct arising in the community.' 'Then you think our presence will create some scandal in the community?' inquired Lassalle. 'Sir, your language is offensive! If you are a gentleman, you must know that French field-officers can never be insulted with impunity!' The major was quiet for a moment. 'Do not misunderstand me,' he replied; 'I did not say that your presence would create scandal in the community, but that I should deem it my duty to prevent any scandal arising in the community of which I am a member. In a civil society like ours, which is its own governor, where all are equal, we must be particularly cautious that these principles, on which its morality is founded, be not outraged or impaired.' 'Why talk about your

principles being outraged? and by us, too, who have this day for the first time seen your colony?' 'Whether you have violated our principles or not, is not the question; but it is of the highest importance to the community that it guard against all danger. For my own part, I can only say that I regard this reserve of Mr. Fearnought as very proper, and one which you will meet at all the other houses in the colony; and not only this, but the houses locked, too, on a second visit—even that of Nathan.' 'What! that of Nathan?' we cried, indignantly. 'He has requested me to speak with you, on this delicate point, in case you insisted on returning, to make known to you that he declined your visits altogether. That's the reason he did not go with you.' We stood speechless, overwhelmed with shame and indignation. 'I was very unwilling to take this delicate business into my hands,' continued the major; 'but as a former comrade of your brave countrymen, I was persuaded to become thus useful to you, as well as to the people here; and to avoid difficulties, which—believe me—would produce the worst consequences to you, I have resolved——' 'Sacre!' muttered Lassalle, foaming with rage. 'By all the fiends!' I exclaimed; for this man had such a cool, easy way of uttering his impertinent insults by bushels, and with such an air of impudent conceit, that we now became really furious. 'What do you mean? What do you want? It seems you intended to challenge us; so, to cut short the whole matter, we will send Amadée for our pistols.' 'First I will finish my business with you, and then we will take care of the other matters,' said the major, very coolly. 'No further insults! we have had enough of them!' exclaimed Lassalle passionately. This man's imperturbable impudence had wrought our passions to the highest pitch of excitement. 'Listen! Nathan charged me to tell you, that you would be to him and his family a very dear neighbor, provided you will not bring with you that colored woman—which, as he was told by the young Acadien, and by your own mouth, you have united with you.' 'Not to bring with us the colored woman united to me?' I asked, with surprise. 'What colored woman?' 'The colored woman with whom you had a *liaison* on the Attakapas, and for whom—as it is said—you have purchased the land to accommodate her with a retreat.'

"At these words Lassalle burst into a loud laugh. Not so with me, for the affair was really a vexatious one; and how-

ever easily we might have frowned down any uncalled-for interference in such a matter, in *la belle France*, here—as we knew from our experience on the Attakapas—the case was really different. With a considerable degree of calmness, I replied: 'Although the way in which you have spoken of this matter is not very flattering, but on the contrary, very offensive, I will not take notice of it; but I must tell you, that you have been imposed on by some tattler—that I have no more intention of bringing hither a colored woman, than I have of eating one.' The major looked on me with doubt. 'Tattler? what? It is the common talk throughout the Attakapas! I don't pretend to know whether it is true or not. Whatever you may do down there is none of our business here, so that you don't bring among us one who will be the cause of offence.' 'Whom do you believe?' interrupted Lassalle, 'two field-officers—cavaliers of an old house—or a couple of vagabond Acadiens? We assure you, on our word of honor, that all we know of this colored woman is this: that we accidentally *saw* her once; and we should not even have seen her then, but we were overtaken by a storm, while looking for our cow.' 'And is this the exact truth?' 'It is so; we saw that family but once, and never but once.' 'And the daily visits? the dancing parties?' 'All rumor—all rumor. The girls led off a dance, but we took no part in it. But understand me well. This explanation we do n't give in order to justify or excuse ourselves—we do n't acknowledge either in you or your backwoodsmen judges any authority to call us to account for our conduct; but we give you this explanation, because we think we owe it to ourselves, in order to silence these silly rumors, which are as false as the people who started them are rude and uncivilized.' 'Whether these people are as rude and uncivilized, as you pretend, or whether they deserve what you say of them, we shall see by and by. Then I can truly accept your word of honor, that there is no truth in the whole story?' 'We have told you so, and that, I suppose, is sufficient.' 'Then wait a moment; I must speak some words with Fearnought.' 'If you intend to set the backwoodsmen right on this point, it is useless; for we have abandoned the idea of settling here, and the opinion of this rude ignorant boor, is not of the least consequence to me.' 'But wait a moment,' replied the major, riding back to the house, from which we were distant only some few hundred feet.

"After a while, he returned with Fearnought. 'I hear you are taking a view of the colony,' said the backwoodsman to me. 'I won't hinder you, but tell you that you would do me a favor to call on me on your return.' 'We can't promise it; we have had enough in calling once, and then—what would your family say?' I replied. 'You appeared very little pleased with our first call—why then a second?' 'We did not think you to be better than many of your countrymen, who bring nothing with them but their dissipation, and such people we like better to see outside our doors than in. But I learn you are brave folks, and you will be welcome. We expect you to supper.' Saying these words, he shook hands with us and returned.

"As Fearnought walked off, the major mounted his horse. 'What do you now say?' he asked. 'That we find no good reason to retract our words; and that this rude, arrogant, gossiping character, does not please us, and has nearly quenched our desire to try our fortune in this neighborhood.' 'If that has disheartened you, which would encourage an American, then I have nothing more to say. I can well understand that you—as French officers and cavaliers—think differently from us on those points, or, as you say, are more liberal;—a fatal liberality, I think, which can never find any countenance with us. If you wish to live at peace with your neighbors, you must submit to public opinion.' 'Not to this puritanic moralizing—this consorior disposition—this malevolent babbling. It is a pity that Nathan, in whom we thought to find quite another man——' 'You are mistaken,' interrupted the major. 'No American could in such a case do otherwise, without grossly injuring the community of which he is a member. You must consider that with us—governed by no strong hand, no priests, no soldiers, no police; no army of civil and military office-holders; no king who, by a *lettre de cachet*, can bury the scandal in a Bastille—I say, that we, who are in some sense governed by principles, punish high treason against them, as severely as you punish high treason against your so-styled immaculate monarchs. Alas! when these last and sole barriers shall be pulled down, we must sink into anarchy and dissoluteness, far more horrible than that with which your *sans-culottes* are cursed.' 'That may all be; but this standing sentry before our neighbor's door, is as much against all *convenance* as morals; and must as well corrupt the character, as render difficult any sincere connections between neighbors.'

'You will become convinced to the contrary. Show yourself to your neighbors to be a man of principles, and you will be more courted than in any other country. I assure you, there is no happier life than that of the American gentleman—living in harmony with his neighbors, and being lord and master of his house and land. He is the only free man on earth.' 'We don't envy this free man; but, at the same time, are not willing to allow such liberty toward us.' 'As you please,' replied the major. 'The man who comes to us, expecting to indulge his passions, will find himself very much mistaken.'

"Here the conversation paused. This constant dispute did not please us, any more than the tone of the major, and the outrageous ban the community had pronounced against us. Our pride was again wounded in a most sensitive point. The idea of having these uncouth sermonizers for neighbors so disgusted us, that had our friends been nearer, we should have taken leave of the backwoods life for ever.

"We rode on, feeling very uneasy; the more so, because we could not return alone. We chose a south-eastern course; and, after a short ride through the live-oaks and magnolias, at the opening of a cypress forest, the major dismounted, and drew a pair of horse-pistols from his holsters. We looked at each other. 'What does the old republican mean?—Why did he bring with him those weapons?—Was it to fight out our dispute?' were queries that arose in our minds. The place was not ill adapted to such a purpose. The whole forest looked more like a vault for burying the dead, than anything else. With an awful gloom the mournful cypress rose on every side, their thick tops impenetrable to the rays of the sun; except where was built a wooden dam, forming a long avenue, through the vista of which darted a few scattered sunbeams, contending with the gloomy darkness that skirted the cypress grove. Nothing was heard but the tapping of the wood-pecker, and the horrid screech of the owls. We halted, in anxious expectation of what was to come. 'Keep your horses hard under the bit, and do not stir!' said the major, now moving himself. 'But where are you going? what brought us hither?' 'Observe this wooden dam attentively.' We looked at the dam, which commenced where the oak forest descended to the marsh. It was rudely but carefully built, about twenty feet broad, by layers of sticks at first, and afterward large logs, increasing in size toward the top. Some of the logs

were cypress, five, six, and seven feet in diameter. As we penetrated farther into the marsh, we found that each layer consisted of large logs, the interstices being filled with the smaller branches of the cypress. It was, as we now perceived, a causeway, called also crossway or corduroy road; and that it led through this cypress swamp.

"The major, without saying a word, and looking intensely forward, cautiously advanced on this road. Suddenly he raised one of his pistols, and the next moment fired. Then arose a horrid howling throughout this dismal swamp. Owls, alligators, and the whole multitude of wild animals set up a hooting, screeching, and roaring, the most awful imaginable, the echoes of which rolled like thunder throughout the gloomy grove. 'An alligator lay across the road,' said the major, turning toward us. 'These animals get up out of their muddy bed to sun themselves on the road; and as our horses have no bells, which usually frighten them, some caution is required. Now we can go on again; he got it in his left eye.'

"We looked and saw nothing; but after advancing some thirty steps, we found the alligator struggling in the agonies of death. He had, indeed, received the death-giving bullet in the left eye. 'But why do you carry us into this marsh?' we inquired. 'To give you a right idea of these arrogant, rude boors,' replied the major. 'Look! this cypress-dam leads half a mile across this swamp.' 'We see it, and beyond that——' 'Beyond, the road leads to a small colony, situated on the other side of the swamp, consisting of about twenty families.' 'Well, and what does all this matter to us?' 'As yet, nothing. From this colony the road leads through an oak forest, a palmetto field, a second swamp—but which is not so large and deep as this, and lies only the half the year under water—thence it leads through a pine forest, and a third swamp, to the Red River.' 'Have the backwoodsmen laid out a road to the Red River? And have they done this alone, and without any assistance from the government?' we asked, shaking our heads with doubt. 'Without help from the government? I doubt whether the government knows anything at all about it,' replied the major. 'The work was a stupendous one, as well the plan as the execution of it. I would show it to you, to afford you some idea of the enterprise of this people.' 'It is, truly, for so small a colony, a stupendous work.' 'Certainly,' continued the major. 'But the work is not greater than the benefit resulting to

the community from it. The American does not undertake a work, unless it is worth the trouble. Here, it is worth it. The colony has, by this road, gained a communication with the States above, and with New-Orleans below; and can therefore sell their products every hour, day, and week. That's more than any colony in Louisiana, not situated on the Mississippi, can boast for itself.'

"Our silence signified our concurrence in the views and statements of the major. 'You see, on the Attakapas they may have as many horses, cows, and so on, as they please—nevertheless, they are poor as beggars, with all their abundance. The products are destroyed, and themselves too, because they are too lazy to open a communication themselves; they rest contented with what the La Fourche, and the Plaquemine, and the bayou, please to grant them, during four months of the year. These people here understand themselves better; the first thing they do, after having a sufficient number of hands, is to lay out this road. If you would only remain twenty-four hours among them, I am sure you would not think them rude and uncivilized, nor be displeased, if, at first, they would prove a stranger before they give up to him all the advantages obtained by the sacrifice of so much labor, and so many lives—for, remember this, although they worked at a time when the swamp was in a great measure drained, many valuable lives were lost.' We remained silent. 'I hope now,' continued the major, politely, 'you will now recall the word "insult," which you just now applied.' 'Pardon! I beg pardon, major!' I replied. 'You know where two such different elements as the French and Americans meet, there must be some friction. We are well persuaded of the magnitude of this work, and cannot withhold our admiration of the people.'

"He now appeared satisfied with our apology, and harmony was again restored. Besides, the work was really one of such magnitude and importance that the government of Louisiana might well boast of it. Yes, any government might! And this undertaking was executed by a hundred and twenty families! What practical sense—what unconquerable spirit, was exhibited in this undertaking! On the other hand, what a contrast between these hardy Americans and our countrymen and their descendants, the Creoles, with their perpetual balls, their childish *plaisirs menus*, and their lazy life. They had now vegetated on the Attakapas for fifty years, without having ever thought of the melioration

of their condition. 'If the French had been here,' said we, 'a dancing-room or a theatre would undoubtedly have been the first thing their combined energy could have effected!' We could not refrain from giving these words to express our feelings. A certain unpleasant, anxious feeling, overcame us. 'Ah!' responded the major, 'but in the French nation there is also to be found material—the true, genuine material—to perform the greatest works. Neither should we forget, that the Canadians were the first who discovered Louisiana, and established there their home. If their government had permitted them to do as they pleased, and had occasionally sent them a cargo of farming utensils, cattle, weapons, and things of this kind—which were of higher value to them than barrels of doubloons—they would probably have succeeded as well as the English colonists have. They are of good stuff; these Canadians, in every respect. But their despotic government would rule everything—would have their hands everywhere; and that's a great mistake—nowhere more so than in founding a colony. Their government took the matter into its own hands, and directed, from Versailles, undertakings of which it knew as much as we do of the moon. It sent colonists good for nothing, and an army of officeholders well paid—but who, as soon as possible, began to consume their salaries in luxuries, to build theatres, dancing and playhouses—in short, to civilize Louisiana at once. Ah! that is the curse of Louisiana. They brought a debauched civilization in their train, which, like the worm, gnaws at the root, and which I fear will sooner or later corrupt the whole fruit of this beautiful country. But we will return,' he concluded; 'the evening draws near, and Mrs. Strong will not thank me if I bring you home to her house sick with a fever.' At these words, we hurried our steps toward Nathan's house.

"Our dislike of the backwoodsmen had somewhat diminished—for, as I before said, we could not but do them the justice which their real merits demanded—yet we retained a strong aversion to that seeming or real arrogance, so prominent in their character. Our purpose of settling here, which a few hours before seemed so likely to prosper, had now become unsettled.

"With these conflicting emotions, we arrived at Fearnought's blockhouse. He received us at the door, took our horses to the stable, and then introduced us to his family. Our reception was now quite different. Mother, daughters, and sons, shook hands with us heartily; and then

went about their business—the sons to putting the yard and doorway in order, the women to arraying the room and supper table; while the master of the house remained with us, sitting by the door. We were much pleased at the interesting scene of this family engaged in their domestic duties. The American women have, in this respect, a peculiar tact. Everything goes on quietly, noiselessly—you rarely hear a scolding voice; everything is calm, easy, and yet so lively. They keep their houses in the most perfect order. It was Saturday evening, which they—as is well known—solemnize as the beginning of the Sabbath. The girls had already made their half Sunday toilet, and were very prettily dressed in robes of woollen and linen, which suited extremely well their slender figures. With the exception of their somewhat democratic hands and feet, they might be deemed very pretty. The table was spread out under the porch, from whence we had a beautiful view of the blue receding prairie, the borders of which, surrounded with a forest of trees, offered a superb prospect. The rays of the setting sun gleamed through the forest, wavering before our eyes, and melting into the most splendid tints; the air was pure, elastic, and refreshing. An indescribable feeling of comfort overcome us, while sitting here in the midst of this family—in the midst of their self-created glory and the magnificent scenery of nature. Before us were placed several bottles of fine wine, which soon made our tongues more active. The conversation soon became lively. We talked of the road we had seen—of the backwoodsmen's household—of the difficulties and labors of a backwoods settlement. Fearnought consoled us with saying, 'It is nowhere easier to begin than in a new settlement, where every new comer would be sure to enjoy the active assistance of his neighbors. The greatest difficulties have been overcome by the original founders of this settlement—by Mr. Strong and his family—who first set the work going, and who have worked for all others; to him the principal thanks are due.'

"This conversation—to us, in our present circumstances, naturally the most interesting—continued for some time. The daughters and sons had already left the table, the sun had set, and we were enjoying the prospect of the rising moon, and the delicious coolness of the evening, when, suddenly music reached our ears—tones so sweet, so divine, that we started up, looked around, and listened—but with-

out uttering a syllable, as if we were afraid we should, by our profane words, frighten away the heavenly sounds. Again came the melancholy tones, like the murmur of departed spirits on the wings of the wandering zephyr. They reached our ears—what do I say? our ears?—every nerve tingled with a thrill more exquisite and divine than we had ever felt before. Silence fell upon our tongues; without voice or gesture, we sat listening with our very souls. Had the tumult of contention—the voice of defiance—the cry of distress—the roar of forest monsters, suddenly broke the silence, we would not have been startled, for with such we had become familiar. But, in this savage wilderness—among these harsh, rude, repulsive squatters; music seemed so out of place, so foreign to their appearance and character, that we fancied it must have descended from Heaven, or floated on the air from some invisible Elysium.

“Mr. Fearnought finally raised us from this ecstatic dream. ‘That is the singing-school!’ said he; ‘our children meet to sing on every Saturday evening.’ ‘Can we not go there?’ I asked. ‘Without doubt. Your horses are saddled, and it is at the regulator’s this evening.’

“We hurried out of the house, mounted our horses, and started off on a brisk trot for Nathan’s. As we drew nearer the house, of course the music lost that divine, ethereal character, which had so much delighted us. But the united voices of sixty or seventy boys and girls, singing praises to their Creator, has always in it something sublimely grand. We had listened to the magic flute, to the swelling organ, and the rich music of the opera; but never did we hear anything that produced the effect of those seventy backwoods’-voices. For more than six months, we had not heard a single note of music. Now, after so long a period, our ears were saluted with the simply beautiful tones of these children, who were offering up, in the innocence of their young souls, praise, and honor, and glory, to the Lord Almighty. The spirits of the invisible world seemed to hover around us—we almost thought we felt the fanning of their wings, and listened as if expecting to hear their celestial voices join the chorus; even as the voices of the host of Heaven sang the advent of the Saviour, with the wondering shepherds of Bethlehem. Our feelings became softened—our thoughts grew devout—our aspirations turned from earth to Heaven, and in that moment of uncontrollable ecstasy, we shed tears of delight.

“The young community were singing the soul-elevating songs of the Presbyterian church—the melodies, as you know, were then mostly of that simple choral style, which has such a touching effect; bowing the haughty, elevating the humble, encouraging the weak, and melting all into a thoughtful, happy, hopeful mood.

“When we reached the front premises of the blockhouse, we found there nearly a hundred saddle-horses. Nearly the whole community had come in; the older men and women were sitting in the house, and the boys and girls were ranged in a circle on the lawn before the door. Within this circle, moved up and down a tall, lank figure—a true representative of New-England school and singing-masters—his hand beating time, and his body swaying to and fro with the rise and fall of the notes. Yet he was a thorough master of the art of sacred music. The squatters, heartily squeezing our hands, made room for us, and we sat down and listened.

“Never had a fashionable concert in the gorgeous saloons of Versailles, charmed the ears of more ardent listeners. Truly, there is something supernatural in religion. It is the tie that links soul to soul—the chain which connects man with Heaven—the power which leads the denizen of the crowded city, the peasant in the fertile field, the settler in the lonely forest, to look up in gratitude to the King who reigns above the stars, and call Him by the sacred name of Father. This power now filled our souls; our ill temper disappeared—our pride was subdued; and this single hour did more to bring us to a good understanding with the squatters, than all our previous and subsequent debates put together. From that hour we became friends.

CHAPTER X.

SQUATTER LIFE.

“AFTER the evening of our attendance at singing-school, the squatters placed more confidence in us, and evinced a desire to become acquainted—which, you may suppose, produced an agreeable effect upon our minds. In short, we had begun to understand each other, and, as our interests were the same, we had little trouble in forming an advantageous and agreeable union. Now that we had finally come to terms, we could not conceive how—with our knowledge of the world—we had so greatly mistaken this people. Of course, we had some few slight quarrels after-

ward—but they grew less and less frequent; and then, there was Nathan at hand to set us right again. Nathan was really a friend; and, in our circumstances, we could not wish for a better. Slow in thought, deliberate and cautious in opinion, he debated and reasoned long upon every question; but when he had once made up his mind, the act followed as quickly and as surely as the report followed the flash from his rifle. Besides, he had command of a light, ironical style of speaking, and a certain grave, stiff, republican air, at that time so generally characteristic of the Americans, and which suited him very well, and made him even interesting. No one knew better than Nathan how to take advantage of the prejudices and feelings of men—and thus, many times, to carry his point directly counter to their opinions.

“The following is a proof of his power in this respect, and shows how he brought us into obedience to the rules of his house. It was Sunday, and the first thing we did after breakfast, was to get hold of a pile of newspapers in one corner of the room. They were from different parts of the Union, and were the very things which promised us the most entertainment, on an American, or—what is the same thing—a puritanic sabbath. Without saying a word, he stepped to the library, and stretching out his long bony arm, took an iron-clasped Bible, and laid it spread open before us. Taking another Bible for himself, he sat down, waiting in quiet, until Mrs. Strong and the rest of the family had taken their seats, with psalm-books in their hands. We laid aside the newspapers, and anxiously waited for what was to come. Nathan opened his bible, cast at us a solemn look, announced a chapter of the Old Testament, and commenced reading aloud. When the chapter was ended, he read a hymn, which was sung—then again another chapter, and another hymn, and then a prayer. His family devotion was performed in a slow, formal manner—yet it was solemn, and in harmony with the domestic arrangements of the house. When this was over, Nathan rose, stepped up before us, and said, pointing to the Bible, ‘That’s the paper we read on the Sabbath; and a better paper was never written. You will do well to read it on such days. It is the paper, which teaches us to keep a quiet, honest house, and ourselves and our people under strict discipline and order. It gives you and them the halt—you understand what I mean by the halt—it gives you and them the the halt; and this halt

is the chief thing, it is the rudder, the compass—and if you don’t possess this halt, broad sails and fair winds will be of no use to you. But I will prescribe nothing to you. I only show you the rules of my house. In yours, you may do as you please.’ In after days we often had cause to feel indebted to him for this hint. Nowhere better than in the solitude of the of the backwoods, can you estimate the good done to the human race by this divine book.

In the afternoon we went to see our neighbors, and the evening we passed with Regulator Nollins. The following day, we intended to take a view of the land and edifices we had bought. Nathan, we hoped, would offer himself as companion; but his business was so urgent, that it was impossible. The only thing he could do, was to send with us his son Joshua. After our examination we were immediately to return to the Attakapas, and there arrange our affairs and prepare for our settlement. Nathan shook his head, and expressed a wish that we would be back again at noon; we could do as we pleased—his house would always be open to us, even should we stay out a year. We thanked him for his offer, and immediately after breakfast we rode away with Amadée and Jean. The major, of whose company we would have been very glad, was on a tour through the colony. The distance from the plantation of Nathan was twelve miles. In one hour and a half, we had ‘Sorrel’s plantation,’ as it was called, before us.

“The situation was delightful. The plantation was watered by a small creek, about fifty feet wide, which—as is seldom the case in this part of the country—was never dry. This stream rose in the pine forests of the upper Opelousas. On one bank, which was fifty feet higher than the other, were scattered beautiful groups of oaks and magnolias; the other was covered with an impenetrable forest of placquemines, peccans, and bean-trees. On a little clearing, of about an acre, stood a small hut. ‘But where is the house?’ we inquired of Joshua. ‘That’s it,’ said he, pointing to the hut. ‘That’s it!—this the two story-house?’ We felt disheartened, as also did Amadée and Jean. Piles of cypress wood, driven into the ground, formed a square of about thirty feet each way, and about as many feet high. These palisade-like walls were interspersed with small logs and sticks, and plastered with mud and Spanish moss. The doors were made of slabs eight feet in length, joined together by cross-pieces,

and the four long slabs plastered with mud. This was the two-story-house and the improvements! Not an iron nail, not a lock, or bolt, or window was to be seen in the whole building! We laughed outright from pure anger. If the land and improvements altogether could have been squeezed into a ball, we would have taken great pleasure in throwing it at the head of the auctioneer and his backwoods associates. 'But, certainly, we can't live in this house, my lord?' said Amadée. 'Live in this bear-hole!' I laughed, 'a hog might live there, perhaps.'

"Not two hours ago, it seemed but child's play to lay out a plantation. Now I stood on the ground, not knowing what to do. 'What's to be done? Shall we make our entrance?' inquired Lassalle; and we both burst into a loud laugh. 'I have a notion,' said the boy, shaking his head, 'you will go home with me. Papa will know what's to be done.' Again we looked at each other. It was the best thing we could do, and we did so with all possible speed.

"As soon as we had dismounted in front of Nathan's house, he looked up to us from the tobacco field. 'I have calculated right, that you would soon be back. I knew just how it was, and that you would not be pleased.' 'Oh, Heavens! the whole is such a horrible wilderness—the house ——' 'Yes,' interrupted Nathan, 'for a thousand dollars, you must not expect to find a castle. But who compelled you to give a thousand dollars? You should have looked out for yourself. Yet it is glorious land ——' 'Glorious land! I wish it was!' 'Glorious land,' continued Nathan; 'and you might make a plantation there, which, in three years, would be worth three thousand dollars.' 'That's easier said than done!' 'Well, I reckon it is. Yet you must calculate, if you begin the matter right, with ten thousand dollars capital, that in ten years it will produce you ten thousand dollars a year. But if you begin wrong, in ten years time you can go and set up a barber's-shop in New-York or Baltimore, as many of your countrymen have done.'

"We knew this. We had ourselves seen some melancholy instances of misfortune in London—marquisses and viscounts in the theatres, playing the fiddle to John Bull—even one who, incognito, had shaved his phiz. 'I will tell you what, I calculate, would be the best. I will tell you my notion at once. Remain all four of you here with me, and get acquainted with the business—become apprentices! That's

the best road you can take, we will then see whether anything can be done with you.' 'What! we become apprentices?' we laughed. 'Yes! every one must be an apprentice, if he wants to become master,' replied Nathan. 'All depends on the beginning.'

"After some reflections, we found the proposal not so very bad. But two cavaliers of the court of France, to become apprentices of a backwoodsman! It was very odd. 'Now come down into the tobacco field,' said Nathan; and we went to him.

"It may not, perhaps, be known, that the high reputation of the tobacco of this country and of Natchitoches, as well of Red River generally, dates from this time; and I have every reason to believe, that the credit is mostly due to this colony, particularly to the plantations of Nathan Strong and Asa Nollins. They were born Virginians; and tobacco growing was, therefore, their favorite occupation. You could taste nothing of a finer flavor than the cigars made from these superb blades.

"Nathan was gathering the tobacco. Naturally we took advantage of this opportunity, of instructing ourselves in one of the most important branches of a planter's business, and assisted him, according to his directions. 'Amadée and Jean,' called he, beckoning them toward an adjoining cotton field, where his family was collected; 'I reckon Mrs. Strong is looking for you.' Amadée and Jean took the hint, and in a quarter of an hour each had a basket, in which they duly gathered a hundred pounds of cotton. All this Nathan taught them by means of jogs and gentle hints, in a sly and coaxing way. We said little during the work. Nathan was a man of deeds, not of words; although he could at times be tedious in true parliamentary manner. 'I see you have the knack,' he said, in the evening, and that was all the praise we got for our day's work.

"For a whole week we were engaged in this occupation; and very soon we had learned the art of cultivating tobacco as well as a son of the Old Dominion. Next we went to work at the cotton-machine, which, at that time, was very imperfect. We pointed out to Nathan its defects, and he listened to us with a good deal of attention. He even stopped it for us; when, with a little trouble, we made considerable improvement in it. The cotton now came out cleaner, and the machine worked so much easier, that we were, a week after, requested to alter the other one, in the colony. Lassalle attended to one, and I to the other. Thus we passed another week.

Our intercourse with the squatters now became so agreeable, and we were so constantly engaged, that weeks passed like days, and days like hours. The evenings we spent in Nathan's family, or with the more distinguished members of the community; we reciting our adventures, and they reciting theirs. We had become the favorites of all the community, the increasing prosperity of which you may perceive, from the simple fact, that more than eight hundred bales of cotton were pressed that fall—a hundred and eighty of which belonged to Nathan and Nollins.

"Thus we remained until the last of October. The planter's life had become so dear to us that we fairly forgot the Attakapas, and even our own settlement. One evening, after we had emptied a bottle of Maderia, Nathan declared to us, that he was of the notion that it was time we were thinking of ourselves. He said, also, that he deemed it to be his duty to do anything for us that he could in return for our services. We replied, that the enjoyment of his hospitality was a sufficient compensation, and that we were rather his debtors. 'I will tell you my notion at once,' he said. 'You have, for thirty-one days, assisted us with four hands; therefore, we owe you a hundred and twenty-four hands.' We did not understand what he meant with his hands. 'It is a custom with us,' he continued, 'when a new comer, promising something for the future, settles with us, to get up a frolic——' 'But, surely, no tarring or feathering frolic we hope?' 'No, not this time,' said Nathan, dryly laughing; 'it is another kind of frolic. It is a frolic which blocks up a house for you, and to which the whole community is invited.' 'But what indeed ought we to do?' 'Well, nothing more than to call at every house, and request, in a friendly way, the men to bring their axes with them to the frolic; and a dozen women you may invite also. They will know what you want.' 'And is that all?' 'All the rest you will see. Yet how large a house do you want? I reckon fifty feet by thirty.' 'And will the community really block up a house for us?' 'Yes, certainly; and it shall be ready by day after to-morrow evening, as far as men and axes can do it. But you must invite the neighbors, not forgetting the women.'

"The next morning we rode around the colony, inviting the inhabitants, according to Nathan's desire. We saw clearly that something unusual was on foot, though we could not imagine what it might be. Great preparations were going on at Nathan's house; cows were butchered, pans

and kettles were arranged in new order, and all was bustle for the whole day.

"Early on the following morning, the great conch-shell sounded for our departure, its trumpet-tones rolling over thirty plantations. When we mounted our horses the whole colony was in commotion. Nathan, with Mrs. Strong and Miss Mary, was ready for the journey—the former on horseback, the two latter in a carriage, in which meat, bread, whisky, pans, kettles, and various utensils were piled up, as though we were moving. Ourselves, with Nathan and his two elder sons, formed the vanguard. We had gone about half way, when the sharp, cracking blows of several axes were heard, and as we advanced, the blows grew louder and louder. We rode on rapidly, and soon saw some fifty backwoodsmen occupied in cutting down trees. Still, riders with their axes came in from all sides. 'They have got here before us,' said Nathan. 'It is time for us to turn our hands to.' And it was time; for the squatters had, in their hot haste, cut down some of the most beautiful magnolias and live-oaks growing on a little summit, where we had intended to build our house. An hour later, the hill would have been entirely bare.

"The lot upon which the house was to stand, we pointed out, with the advice of Nathan. It was upon the apex of the hill, which, as I said, rises about fifty feet above the creek, overlooking the whole neighborhood. The work grew now more and more lively. Some fifty neighbors were occupied in cutting down trees, while fifty others were trimming off the branches. On the prairie at our feet, pastured more than a hundred horses; for every one rode—not only the men, but the women and girls also. Some thirty women and girls, riding part in carriages and part on horseback, came up and shook hands with us; and, as soon as the men had built up the kitchen, they begun their cookery. In less than an hour, the fire crackled and flamed up under more than twenty pans and kettles: roast-beef, beef-steaks, puddings, and cakes were cooking, and barrels of whisky rolled in the grass. It was a scene really picturesque and exciting.

"At four o'clock the house stood blocked up—sixty feet long, fifty wide, and four stories high, built of cypress-logs a foot thick. The work was immense—incredible! If we had not been persuaded with our own eyes, we never could have believed it possible. When everything was ready thus far, Nathan turned to us and those standing round, saying, 'You have

now a house—the roof will come by-and-by; and as for the interior arrangement and regulations, you must do that yourselves. But, in order to help you do this, we will tow up that thing there,’ he said, pointing to the cottage of the syndic; otherwise the fever here could play you a trick. But first we must get a bridge.’ As he spoke, the hundred—or, to speak more literally—the two hundred hands, seized the heavy logs left after blocking up, threw them over the creek, and with cross-pieces soon constructed a bridge. They then took Sorrel’s house to pieces, and brought the materials across the bridge to the top of the hill, and with them got our house ready in two hours.

“Now came the feast. Although the squatters, during the work, had snatched many a mouthful of beef-steak, bread, or cake, yet the principal meal was saved to the last. A more gay and jovial meal was never before taken. Twenty bright fires were blazing, and round them the squatters were seated, while we acted as landlords. It was really a delightful scene. We parted, well pleased with each other. The moon stood high in the heavens when we, in company with Nathan and his family, mounted our horses to return. ‘And do you know that the people here are very fond of you, colonel?’ began Nathan, after we had rode on a short time in silence. We, of course, assured him that we were pleased with the fondness of the people. ‘Yes; they are fond of you, colonel, and you may congratulate yourselves on their favor. They will give you some more frolics yet.’ ‘How’s that?—more frolics yet?’ ‘Yes; I told you that Nollins and myself were indebted to you for a hundred and twenty-four days’ work. We intended to pay these debts at odd times; but then the citizens offered to do this for us at once, and then to settle with us. It’s the best way, I think.’ ‘But certainly you will not believe, Mr. Strong, that we worked for daily pay with you and your brother-in-law?’ ‘I reckon you did not; but I reckon it would be wrong for Nathan to take the labor of four strangers, without being willing to lend them his hands also.’ ‘Ah! if you take it in this way, then it is another thing. But we enjoyed your hospitality.’ ‘And we yours,’ replied Nathan; ‘we have given you nothing. The frolic goes on your account. But you must give a good word to Mrs. Strong, that she may again superintend another frolic for you.’ And we gave her a good word, with an invitation to superintend our frolic for the next day.

“On the following morning, long before sunrise, the conch-shell again sounded from Nathan’s porch, and echoed over the plantations. This time we were earlier, and determined not to be the last. Miss Elizabeth, who accompanied us, had just time enough to make us a cup of coffee over a fire which had not yet been extinguished, before the squatters arrived. When they finally arrived, Nathan examined the whole neighborhood to find where we could best begin the clearings. The choice fell on the bank, opposite the block-house, on account of its rich bottom land. At this frolic, our forty squatter friends cleared up nine acres of the best bottom land.

“The next day, forty squatters were present, who cleared ten acres; and at the fourth frolic forty men cleared eleven acres. They had relieved each other, so that each one gave a day’s work, for which Nathan had to settle with them. When the last frolic was over, Nathan seized our hands, and in presence of our neighbors, pointing to the wooden walls of the house, said: ‘I reckon we have now put you in the way to get along, if you keep your five senses about you. See how we have set you agoing. We only wanted to see, first, whether anything could be done with you, and whether you had a neighborly disposition. We see now that you are somebody, and therefore we have made your house and cleared up thirty acres for you, on which you can sow and plant something to make you a good beginning, young man. You see we are not the people who refuse to give a stranger a good pull, if he is respectable, and good-natured. I hope we shall be good neighbors; at least if we are not, we have shown you that the fault will not be on our part. And now you owe to me and Mr. Nollins, for whisky, beef and hams, fifty-five dollars.’ ‘We will willingly pay you double that, dear Nathan,’ I replied. ‘Fifty-five dollars, I have said,’ dryly interrupted Nathan; ‘and let me tell you, man, never to offer a citizen more than he asks. He will always take what belongs to him, be assured. We are not timid, as Americans, I assure you.’

“Such was the man to whom we owed our beginning, our civil existence, in Louisiana. The most abstinent, sober, inaccessible—and again, the most benevolent and intelligent person we ever met in our life of thirty years. His ideas had something so magnificent—his mind so shrewd, thorough, and practical. But we will return to the history of our settlement.

“We were now on the path which we

were to follow, and which we could hardly lose, if we did not wilfully shut our eyes. And we followed it with a passion and a delight, which imparted to our souls a new impulse. This impulse—this joyous, delightful activity—we would not have exchanged for a life in the most brilliant court of Europe. And indeed, he who has spent his whole life in a highly civilized or refined state of society, protected and guarded at every step, anticipated in every wish, moved altogether by the artificial springs of society—he, who has thus lived, has never tried his own strength, and cannot possibly conceive the pure pleasure, the delight, which the Creator, as it were, of our own existence imparts, when the works of our hands gradually rise before our eyes, and we become conscious of powers, which have so long lain dormant, as to be unknown to ourselves. There is a wonderful charm, an electrifying ecstasy, in this feeling of awakening powers. We enjoyed this delight in long draughts; and, indeed, it made these first years in the backwoods the happiest in our life, in spite of the manifold, and sometimes great difficulties, we had to contend with—in spite of the never-ending labors meeting us on every side.

"These squatters, I said, had awakened in us a consciousness of our powers, and had set us under-way; yet of our house, there stood only the bare wooden walls, without roof, windows, chimney or floor. These we must provide ourselves, and this was done comparatively easy. Acadiens were hired to put on the roof, and Americans to build up the chimney. Five miles above stood the saw-mill, erected by the son of Major Gale, who, at the same time, was carpenter and cabinet-maker. We made a bargain with him to finish our house, and in eight weeks we moved into it, with all our effects. We had no time to visit our friends in the Attakapas, and accordingly sent Amadée, who provided for the transportation of our things. Our plantation we rented to Hauterogue. We thought now of nothing but our new undertaking. Music, books, billiards, friends, (except our squatter neighbors,) even our beloved France, its sufferings and its glory—all, all were forgotten. We hardly took time to write to our friends. Our most interesting entertainment was to talk over, in the evening, the labors of the day—what we had done, how many trees we had cut down, and thus to dwell on every minute transaction of the day.

"In the midst of all this activity, we began to speculate on our condition and the

affairs of life, viewing things in a more real and practical manner than before. Quite a revolution occurred in our views of life and politics. The kingly crown appeared to us a different thing. This change of ideas struck us as a singular psychological phenomenon; for, as we had not discoursed of these matters with our squatter neighbors, our ideas were spontaneous. Until now, no black man had entered our house. We congratulated ourselves on this fact—yet began to perceive that there was no living in Louisiana without this necessary evil. To cultivate our fields, for any length of time, without slave labor, was impossible. To do without slaves would ruin us, and be productive of no benefit to the black race. On the contrary, if we held slaves, we could not only improve their condition, but could, at the same time, increase a beneficial social influence over them. There are some evils we cannot cure by avoiding them, but only by boldly meeting and manfully struggling with them. Such an evil is slavery in the southern parts of the Union. Still we thought there was something horrible in buying or holding slaves.

"We had now got our plantation so far in order, that we could think of our long delayed journey to the capital, which, perhaps, ought to have been performed before we begun our settlement, and pay our respects to the governor and other officers. But the yellow fever in New-Orleans, and our business at home, detained us until late in November. We now hastened, the more, as Lefebvre, who had been surgeon in my regiment, had just arrived with letters from Europe. We arrived in New-Orleans, delivered our letters, and found accommodations with Baron M——y, who is of an old family. He presented us to the governor, who was so kind as to set off a donation to me near the land I had purchased, and to Lassalle also a tract of two thousand acres. At that time they were not so fastidious about making a donation. The United States first set a price to these lands. Here we met our dear Lefebvre, to whom the hospitality of our brave M——y had also assigned a room near our apartments. In business affairs, in visits to the sugar plantations near the city, in feasts, and in talking of dear France and European affairs, we passed fourteen days, which seemed but so many hours. Having finished our purchases, inspected several sugar plantations, and examined the relation between slaves and their masters, we thought of returning home. The day before our intended departure, M——y had

set apart to be that of the opening of his villa, about five miles below New-Orleans. Only some few friends, with Lefebre and ourselves, had been invited.

"It was a delightful day in February. We were seated in sociable conversation, in a superb pavilion, round which clustered the countless odoriferous flowers of this region, intermingling with an ocean of white and red roses. Before us rolled in silent grandeur the powerful Mississippi, down the course of which our eyes wandered as far as the Great Bend. Suddenly, my eye rested on a vessel which had anchored about a mile below the villa. The wind had suddenly changed to an adverse direction, and driven the vessel nearly ashore. The appearance of the ship struck me—in its spars, rigging, port-holes, and every part, there was an air of strangeness which was very apt to awaken suspicion. 'It is a slave-ship,' quietly remarked one of the guests. 'A slave-ship!' I exclaimed; 'is the introduction of slaves permitted? I understood it was forbidden under Baron Canoudet.' 'So it was,' rejoined Baron M——y, but the evil consequences of this prohibition became so evident, that the law was abrogated. Perhaps you wish to purchase slaves? If so, you have now a good opportunity.' I declined purchasing. The baron shook his head. 'Be cautious, my dear friend,' said he, 'how you indulge in sentimental antipathies; we are in Louisiana, where such antipathies can only become detrimental to you. With us, the humanity of the traffic does not consist in preserving ourselves free from it, but in getting it into our hands and thus bearing the sway. If the influential and respectable portion of the people bear sway, this evil will result in good to Louisiana, and even to the blacks. Therefore it was I wished that you, or any other respectable man, would purchase.' I remained silent. The company rose, after a little while, to go down to the ship, and 'inspect the cargo,' as they expressed themselves.

"A portion of this living cargo had already been put on shore. In one group, some of the old women were engaged in cleaning the most filthy of the negroes. A second group was dancing to the music of two old kettles, which an old negro was beating. As soon as one of the blacks had escaped from the purifying hands of the old woman, the miserable creature joined the dance, apparently as happy as if he was in his native wilds. This scene seemed to be so common to my companions, that not one said a word about it.

"We had now, however, approached within speaking distance of the vessel, when the captain came to meet us, inviting us to examine the cargo and choose our negroes. We stepped on board the ship, which was just being cleaned of seven month's dirt; but the stench was so insupportable that we soon returned. On the deck we observed a partition, near which was a cannon, loaded (as I afterward learned) with balls. I could not refrain from remonstrating with the captain, on the iniquity of this traffic. 'What do you want?' said he, shrugging his shoulders; 'all these blacks would have been dead long since if we had not purchased them; they were all captives of war, condemned to death. Fortunately, we arrived in time to save their lives.'

"The captain then described to us the horrible life of the inhabitants of the African slave-coast. He was still engaged in this account, when Dr. Lefebre returned from the deck. In spite of the suffocating stench, he had gone on board, but now came running to the captain: 'Captain, if you don't take care of those twenty-five miserable beings under the lower deck, tomorrow not one of them will be alive.' The captain shrugged his shoulders, and replied, 'Can't help it!' 'Twenty-five!' I exclaimed, shuddering. 'Can't help it!' said the captain; 'if I were above, I might do something. The northwester is the cause of it all.' We walked over the planks, stepped on deck, and went below; but the stench was so suffocating, that we could hardly breathe. Lefebre opened the partition. 'Great Heaven!' I exclaimed. At the entrance, a woman was stretched out in the agonies of dissolution; her dark flesh, where it was not covered with filth, wore the appearance of death. To her breast was hanging an almost lifeless infant. The physician raised her up, and brought her and the child to the open air. 'You may have those twenty-five blacks, with their ten sucklings, for as many piasters,' said the captain. 'If you save only one fifth, you will make a good bargain. I have no time for it.' 'Heaven forbid! who will here think of a bargain? I give you the twenty-five piasters. Let them be brought on deck.'

"The blacks now belonged to me. Never in my life had I seen uglier forms. They were brought on deck, and thence on shore. We hurried to the villa, in order to procure woollen-blankets, medicine, and refreshments. Two of these miserable beings died that night, three the next day, and afterward five on the passage up the

Mississippi. Of the twenty-five we brought home fifteen, and seven sucklings. Twelve of them and five children were restored; the remainder died in consequence of their horrible sufferings on their passage across the ocean.

"It was almost despairing to our feelings of humanity to bring up these beings, possessing so little of human nature, and being more bestial even than the beasts. I often asked myself, 'Is it possible that these creatures, with their ourang-outang skulls—these women, ugly beyond all conception, eating the earth, having neither mind nor memory, not even instinct—is it possible that these creatures are really human beings? After they had mixed with slaves born in the country, for the first time they evinced something like instinct. But enough of the blacks. My object is only to show that it is not impossible to hold slaves, and yet remain human.

"This year the treaty of Amiens brought peace, and we now thought of bringing over our beloved friends. It was impossible for me to leave the plantation; accordingly, Lassalle went to Europe for our friends. Oh! how I counted the weeks and the days that intervened between me and my Eleanora! At the end of four months, I had the pleasure of clasping her in my arms.

"We were married in New Orleans; but the true wedding-day was when I should introduce my beloved wife into the self-created asylum—the elysium—in which she was to reign as goddess. My wishes, my fondest expectations, were now fulfilled. Everything betokened happy days. And happy they were—happier than we had ever known before! Our homes began to flourish under the management of our four excellent wives. The blacks, who had found a mother, became gradually tractable. We were loved by the Acadians, esteemed by our squatter friends; our necessaries not only satisfied, but we could even indulge in the luxuries of life. Weeks, months, years passed, with the most delightful, cloudless, calm, yet active life. I wish you had seen and heard Nathan and Madame Vignerolles—she with her gay gracefulness, combined with a natural freedom—he, cold and calculating, and observing that Mrs. Vignerolles was the loveliest backwoods female that ever trod shoe-leather.

Thus we passed three years in happy felicity, when came the news that Louisiana—in consequence of the last peace with Spain—was to be restored to France;

a report which letters from the capital soon confirmed as official, adding, that the commissioner for taking possession was every day expected. For a moment we were overwhelmed at this intelligence. We had emigrated, after having fought in the Vendée against Bonaparte; but we were reconciled by the liberal policy which the first consul adopted toward the emigrants. We were aware, that several of our friends had not only returned to France, but had been regarded and even favored by him. We concluded, therefore, to go to New-Orleans in order to inform ourselves of the condition of affairs. Besides, our wives were near the period of confinement, and it was a matter of fashion in Louisiana to go to New-Orleans. The day before our arrival in New-Orleans, Monsieur Laurat, the commissioner, had arrived. We were presented to him. We found in him a man of honor—a Frenchman from top to bottom—and this was what we liked. We were gratified with his instructions, to protect, equally, all Frenchmen, whatever might be their political creed; and he, besides, promised us every assistance in his power. His business was not so much to take possession of Louisiana in behalf of France, as to deliver it up to the United States. He confirmed our donations, which the indolent Spanish government could never find time to settle on a permanent basis.

"On the thirtieth day of November, he took possession of the territory in presence of the Spanish commissioners—the Marquis de Caza, and the Governor de Salcedo; and on the twentieth day of December delivered it over to Messrs. Claiborne and Wilkinson, the American plenipotentiaries.

"None but a Frenchman can form any conception of the rejoicing which took place, on the conclusion of the ceremony of taking possession by the French commissioners. By far the greater part of the population were French, or of French origin. The whole capital was intoxicated, and even in a paroxysm of joy. Festivals, illuminations, balls, continued without interruption for twenty days. New-Orleans had never seen such a prodigality of rejoicings. Yet never was there a more complete change than when, on the twenty-first day of December, the tri-colored flag sunk from the City Hall and public buildings, to give place to that of the stripes and stars—which, except the hurrahs of a few sailors and Americans, was scarcely greeted with a cheer. Yet the Frenchmen had no cause of complaint.

The first consul had stipulated, that all the inhabitants should be secure in their former titles, and should be placed on an equal footing with the citizens of the States. The festivities attendant on the occasion, and the various commissions put on us by our friends among the squatters and in the Attakapas—who were interested in the sale of their cotton—occupied us two months. We had a thousand bales for Nathan and Nollins alone in commission, besides several hundred bales of our own. The sale required time. On account of the health of our wives, we were compelled to remain yet longer in the city. We had engaged Lefebvre as our physician, as in the whole neighborhood at home, there was no one we could trust on such an occasion. Gladly would we have hastened home to our asylum, if we could, for we had heard of strange doings in the colony. Whole crowds of adventurers and land-sharks, as they term the speculators in lands, had come from the north, like locusts—entering farms, plantations, cottages and houses, calculating for lands. Among them were some men of great political influence; then again, there were young whisky-drinking lieutenants, now commandants of forts—turners, tanners, and other honest people of this sort, advanced to sheriffs and magistrates, who were to administer justice in a country whose customs, laws, and language they could not understand. Several ejections, where the titles could not be easily proved, had taken place. Amadée wrote us to hasten our return, as we should find strange alterations in the colony.

“Our ladies recovered; and enriched with two boys and large sums of cash, we returned, and met Amadée on the Red River, with horses, which we attached to a carriage we had bought in New-Orleans. We dispatched the ladies in the carriage, and mounting the horses of Amadée ourselves, rode for Nathan as fast as the animals could carry us, so great was our desire to see him.

CHAPTER XI.

TROUBLES.

“As we rode on, we felt as if we had come too late. A deep silence reigned throughout the colony. We did not meet a living soul, until we had arrived in front of Nathan’s blockhouse. James, his eldest son, came out to meet us. With an uncommonly serious air he shook our hands. ‘Where is friend Nathan?’ I anxiously

inquired. ‘At this time far from here, colonel.’ ‘At this time far from here? Be so good as to tell him we have returned.’ ‘It would cost a good horse many a hard day’s trot, to tell him that! Father has moved away.’ ‘Moved away!’ I exclaimed; ‘how is this?’ ‘Yes; moved away, with wife and children, mother, and sister, Mary, and brother Joshua, and the negroes, and cattle, and everything; and twenty families have gone with him. Look, there has been a moving,’ said he, pointing at the same time to the deserted piazza. ‘Moved away!’ we again exclaimed, and I almost fainted. ‘Moved away,’ repeated James. ‘He thought it was time to be going when he saw the lawyers and the sheriffs at their work.’ ‘What has the law and the sheriffs to do with your father? He has committed no murder or theft.’ ‘Ah, I reckon he hain’t. But the lawyers don’t ask for murder or theft, but for land; and, as you know, we have no titles or grants to produce. There came, six weeks ago, a swarm, measuring the plantation on every side; and two weeks afterward a sheriff, with his official staff, claimed it as public land, belonging to Congress.’ ‘And your father was sent away?’ ‘What could he do against the law?’ said the young man. ‘Father, seeing he had no other way to do but buy the land, has left with me a writing about it.’ James handed me the writing, or letter of attorney as it was. Thereby I, together with Lassalle, was authorized to purchase the land possessed by him, for his family and friends—namely, James, Geoffry, Jonathan, and Mrs. Barclay—who preferred to stay in Louisiana; and for this purpose to make use of the money in my hands, amounting to about six thousand piasters. Should we not be able to purchase the land, then he requested me to dispose, as well as I could, of all the movables and immovables left behind, and among them the two cotton machines. ‘But, for Heavens sake! why did not your father send me word? Why did he not wait? In New-Orleans I could have arranged the matter —’ ‘You, colonel, don’t know my father,’ said James, shaking his head, ‘if you are of the notion, that he would first buy what he deems to be his property. But the law is otherwise. He would not have anything more to do with Louisiana, and looks for a land where no sheriffs or law can force him to go a house further.’ ‘Then he will have to look in some newly discovered part of the world,’ I replied, ill-humoredly. ‘But I see your father prefers rather to contend with Spanish muskets than American laws.’ ‘Eh!

who would contend with the law!' responded the young man. 'Rather with eighty-five Spanish muskets than with the law! Heaven forbid it!'

"The young man pronounced these words in a tone of awe, that would have led us—who then were not aware of the horror the Americans have for the law—to form the opinion that old Nathan had had a falling out with the law of his country, if we had not been convinced to the contrary by the circumstance that he still visited his former home, and kept up a connection with it. 'Eh!' said the young man, perhaps guessing our thoughts—'Eh! it was a gloomy hour, you may believe it, when father the last time looked upon the blockhouse, and took out Asa's corpse.' 'And they have then taken Asa's corpse with them?' 'Eh, they have!'

"We stood there sorrowful, the tears dropping from our eyes. What must have been the feelings of that iron-souled man, when forced to give up, to his own countrymen, the very land for which he had strained every nerve and faculty through ten long years? 'I see you are the man, colonel, whom my father took you to be. Perhaps the time——' 'Shall we see him again or not? Speak, young man! Comes he back or not?' we both exclaimed simultaneously, interrupting him. The young man shook his head. 'I cannot say as to that. But I was saying, that father was not deceived in you, when he told me you would attend to his affairs.' 'We will, as men of honor. Now farewell: to-morrow we will meet again.'

"We rode away, hardly masters of our reason, so much had this blow weakened us; for Nathan was more than our friend. He had become to us a necessity—he had grown to our hearts—the whole colony, everything, bore marks of his impress. When we entered our house, the ladies came to meet us with tears in their eyes. They, too, had learned the loss we had sustained. This and the following nights, were the most melancholy ones we had ever passed in Louisiana. To the ladies, to Amadeé, to the servants—to every one, Nathan was all in all.

"On the following day, Nathan's remaining sons, with their friends, came to attend to the old man's business. As James had said, it was government agents who had expelled Nathan. Yet these land sharks, as they were significantly termed, had not been equally severe with all the squatters. Some were allowed their plantations, while others had been driven away. We perceived that we had to deal

with an unprincipled set of scoundrels, in these agents. We, therefore, pursued an American course. We got up a petition, in English and French, to the territorial government, for a public sale of the lands settled by Nathan and his friends, to take place as soon as practicable, hoping thus to rescue it from its temporary possessors. We set forth in the petition the numerous sacrifices made by the squatters, and the great improvements they had made on the land. The petition was circulated throughout the Attakapas and Opelousas, and about a thousand signatures obtained. The result was successful. The government could not resist the universal opinion of the Creoles and French. The day of sale was appointed, and the land-speculators, finding the nets they had set to catch the squatters torn away, and not daring to risk the popular indignation, did not appear at the sale. The squatters bought in their plantations at the government prices. By this title they, in a great measure, possess their lands to this day; and from them, have sprung some of the most respectable and wealthy families in Louisiana. We always hoped that Nathan, learning the result, would return; but we were disappointed.

"Years passed by. We often thought of the rough, and at the same time kind and brave regulator, under whose guidance and protection we had laid the foundation of our fortunes. Time flowed on, and the cares and troubles caused by a rapidly increasing colony, removed his memory more and more into the background, though it was never effaced from our hearts.

"Eight years after the disappearance of Nathan, in the fall of 1811, my heart was crushed beneath the heaviest blow a man can feel. My beloved, idolized Eleanor, the dear partner of my soul, was summoned to heaven. He who has forsaken the land of his birth, and taken up his abode in the solitary wilderness of a new country, feels even the lightest misfortunes keenly; but, oh! with what a paralyzing blight this greatest of all afflictions came upon me! My mental and physical strength seemed to fail rapidly; life had lost its charms for me, and I looked with sorrow even upon the sweet, innocent, laughing Genevieve, the last pledge of our love. Lefebvre, in order to relieve me of this melancholy, proposed an excursion into the western prairies. James had now become a member of Congress; and although it was in the midst of the cotton-harvest, cheerfully urged the proposal, and offered to join us. The expedition was undertaken soon after. Several sons of distinguished neighbors

joined with us, and when we halted at the fort of Natchitoches, the commander begged to accompany us with several of his men.

"The party soon entered the Spanish territory. We were well prepared for such an excursion, and had the pleasure of enjoying several wild-horse and buffalo hunts, without being subject to the privations which generally attend such adventures.

"We had turned toward the Rio del Norte, and were soon in the Mexican province of Texas, at least five hundred miles from home. One evening, after a buffalo chase, we reached the apex of a hill, from which we had a delightful view of a large river. A curve, in this river, formed a peninsula of some ten miles long and about as many wide. We stood, admiring the extreme beauty and fertility of this peninsula, unsurpassed by any we had ever seen in Louisiana. When behind the groups of colossal trees, we got sight of cottages, plantations, in short, of a colony. I had just raised my spy-glass, when our Indian guides exclaimed: 'Americans! Americans!'

"It was an American colony. You can readily imagine we stood not long. We hastened to the bank of the river, when two young men, who were crossing in a boat, saw us, and cried out, 'Colonel! James!' at the same time leaping to the bank, and running toward us. One of them was Joshua, the youngest son of Nathan. In half an hour we embraced the old regulator—our own dear, dear, never-to-be-forgotten Nathan! He was regulator again—again had a blockhouse, which might more properly be called a fort, and had finally found peace away from all land-speculators, sheriffs, and land-officers.

"And there he lives, as regulator, president, governor—in short, chief of nearly a thousand squatters. To the east of his plantation, a certain Colonel Austin had founded a second colony; but the great nerve of the growing state was the colony of which Nathan was the chief."

CHAPTER XII.

BUT WHOM HAVE WE HERE?

THE count arose, while the rest of us remained sitting. The two young Frenchmen burst out into the most enthusiastic praise of the "*contre délicieux*!" the "*squatter admirable*!" and so on. We looked at each other.

"Well! this squatter-life, with all its

originality, has something in it more human and civilized than we should at first expect," I remarked.

Lassalle and Hauterouge expressed the same opinion, looking first at the count, and then at me.

"And his plans?" I asked, after a pause.

"Ah! his plans!" replied Lassalle—"his plans! He certainly is the man to contend with fate, but not to reveal his plans. Time will develop them. Be assured they will ripen, and will bring forth fruit; but what fruit?—this Heaven only knows!"

"And do you believe that, in Texas, he will succeed?"

"Texas is just the scene for such enterprise: a thin population—in the whole country hardly ten thousand souls."

"And do you believe he indulges in such chimerical schemes?"

"I assure you it is no chimerical scheme. More than half of it is already realized. The colony amounts to over a thousand souls; it is formally established as a little state?"

"Have you seen him since this time?"

"Twice; for the count, with the exception of one summer spent in France, regularly passed the hot months with him. He possesses, indeed, an extraordinary power over Vignerolles, and is the principal cause of his not returning to France."

I shook my head.

"Mademoiselle Genevieve, too, before she departed for the seminary in France, several times passed the unhealthy season with Nathan. The climate, though under the same degree of latitude as New-Orleans, is one of the healthiest and most delightful in the world."

"How! Mademoiselle Genevieve? Has the count ventured, with her, over the rough roads, and among the Indians?"

"A pretty good road, as you know, leads from Nacogdoches to Antonio de Bexar, whence the distance is not much over a hundred miles. The road leads over prairies, and through a delightful country. Besides, Nathan always sent an escort to Antonio de Bexar, and generally united some of the officers of the fort to the escort."

"Singular! indeed, singular! this Orestes and Pylades friendship! Yet it happens with persons, having a long time lived in over-refined society, just as with those constitutions which have been corrupted through over-spiced food. Only in natural, simple nourishment, can such seek recovery; and, once accustomed to it, they look

back with disgust on the *haut-gout* of their former debauchery."

But the count seems to become uneasy, vehemently stepping up and down the room; he hurries to the window, opens the casement, parts the blinds, and stretches out his head—his eyes piercing the star-lit night.

"Vignerolles! what's the matter? you are excited!—the night air—" cried Lassalle and Hauterouge, rising.

Vignerolles does not see nor hear. With much ado, they succeed in drawing him from the window. In a moment there was heard something like horses trotting. We all listened. They are really horses' hoofs, approaching with a brisk trot. The count listens a moment, then runs to the bell and rings it impetuously.

"They come! they come!" he cried, running toward papa, who was just entering: "Heaven be praised!" He cries, and screams as if the house was on fire. Negroes and negresses run up with flambeaux, lights and cartoons, and following on their heels come Louise, Genevieve, and Emily.

"You still up, Louise? what do you do up so long? That is really keeping fashionable hours!"

"Is it not, George? and you thought I was in bed?" But she do n't take time to finish her words. She twines her arm around Genevieve, and both dance out to the piazza.

"They come! they come! they are already at the gate of the court-yard!" they cried, through the door of the drawing-room.

"They come!" joined all in the chorus, and run toward the piazza, with lanterns and torches in their hands.

"Who can this be?" I thought. "It is very strange—very, strange! who can it be, for whose sake they keep the whole house awake and in uproar till three o'clock in the morning? It seems to be a numerous company; two ladies, judging from their white petticoats, and at least half-a-dozen men."

"That's papa!" cried Miss Warren. "Papa! welcome, papa!" cried she, with childish joy.

"It is papa!" she cried again, in a more serious tone. I look—the features are not unknown to me. Who can ever forget those stiff, harsh features, if once seen? It is Mr. Warren.

"But how is this, that he comes so—that we have the pleasure of his company so unexpected?"

There is no time to answer any ques-

tions. One surprise follows close at the heels of another. Hardly had Emily exclaimed "Papa!" when Genevieve, as if out of her wits, screams "Papa!" also, and flies down the piazza, rushes amid the horses, toward one of the riders who had descended, and embraces him heartily. After her, rushed the count—not very count-like. The daughter hangs on the right side of the man's neck—the father on the left. He stoops his gigantic figure for them to reach him—both kiss him passionately.

"Who is he? who shares, at least on one side, such an enviable reception? Who is he? Louise!—Papa!"

But neither Louise nor papa could find time to answer. No sooner do they see the count embracing this gigantic, antediluvian figure, than they hasten to pay their *honneurs* also; yet offering first to shake hands with Mr. Warren and his lady.

"This is strange! Is it all a farce? Who is the man, Louise?"

"Have you not heard?"

"What!—who is he?"

"I will see, dear George, in a moment."

"Howard, dear brother! I am back from my night-race. I would not have lost it for all the money in the world! Hear now—the man has more blood in his little finger than a horse could drink. But where is Mrs. Doughby?"

"But who is he?"

"But I don't see Julie!" and off ran the mad fellow in search of Julie. He will find her in bed. She would not be disturbed from her sound sleep, even if Bony himself had come. And it seemed as if Bonaparte *had* honored our house with his presence; everything is so confused—such a running—such an honoring of this Nimrod! Even the two young Frenchmen stood bowing, and scraping, as if a man stood behind them, moving them with a cord, like puppets.

"But, papa! tell me who that man is?"

"Ah! a man who deserves respect—a great man —"

"But who is he?"

"One moment, dear Howard! I will see."

Well, has one ever seen such a state of things! Here comes one who will tell me. "Where have you been, dear Richards? Tell me, for Heaven's sake! who is that man, in the leather-jacket and linsey-woolsey coat, whose share of honors fall on him as if —"

"He is a regulator, from Texas."

"A regulator, from Texas? Nathan?"

"A Mr. Strong, who has done great

things in Texas. Doughby left us to accompany him down. He is a powerful man, and a bosom friend of the count's."

Ah! a bosom friend he is, indeed! This, then, is old Nathan, whose history marks so many epochs in the squatter annals! His person was venerable—passed eighty—a real giant in ruins. His strongly marked features were massive, antique, almost sublime; his forehead and cheeks covered as with iron-rust and moss. Yet his frame was not decrepit, or his person repulsive; on the contrary, you look with respect and awe on this mossy, rusty face—and those sharp, gray eyes, betoken a spirit yet able to contend with countless squatter dangers. A noble specimen of a squatter chief! a beautiful picture, as he—with the count on the one side and his daughter on the other—ascended the steps of the piazza.

All gave way, respectfully, to make room for these three. When they reached the drawing-room, Louise sprung to arrange the cushions on the sofa, in order to make him a soft seat; and Genevieve and the count, how carefully they set him down! If he had been their grandfather, their affection could not have been stronger.

"Quick, now, some refreshments before going to bed! Tea—or rather a glass of Madeira is your drink, is it not, papa?" said the smiling Genevieve. "You see I have not forgotten your taste; nor have we forgotten you at all."

"I know it, my dear angel!" he replied. "I did not forget you, as you see. I must come, though my presence at home was not useless. But I reckoned, that if before my departure for that land where we must all go, never to return, I would see you, and those of my family remaining behind, to see what you have done, and see your home; it was now high time for me. I longed once more to behold my country, my family, and my beloved friends at their own home; and reckoned that I had no time to lose—for, as the proverb says: 'The young *may* die, the old *must*.'"

"I hope that day is far distant, dear Nathan!" consoled the count.

"I have a notion, that for me it is well always to be ready, dear colonel. I have eighty years upon my shoulders you know. But I *am* ready; I have done my duty as well as I could, I reckon—though in my own way; and that, surely, is all that we can do. Does not the Bible say, that some are destined to be apostles, others evangelists, and others something else? The Lord destined me to be a squatter, and as such, I have done what I could for the

welfare of my fellow-men, and future generations."

"That you have, dear friend!" said the count, all assenting—"that you have; you have done much in your way."

Soon after, Nathan rose from the sofa and retired to his bed. Sweet be thy repose, venerable patriarch! Manfully hast thou battled with the storms of Time, and nobly triumphed. His cold fingers have frosted thy locks; but the throb of thy heart is as firm, and the fire of thine eye as bright, as in the springtime of thy eventful life.

We returned, to exchange a few words with the other guests. Two grandsons of Nathan had accompanied him—they were clever young men. The count was now engaged with Mr. and Mrs. Warren, and excused himself for having at first exclusively devoted himself to Nathan.

"It needs no excuse, Count Vignerolles," replied Nathan. "Such a welcome equally honors the giver and the receiver."

We now took our leave, wishing each other good night. But when I and my Louise had slipped into our little room, the light French nature had got possession of my dear wife, and—sleepy as she felt—she could not help tripping about the room, delighted from the bottom of her heart.

"Everything has gone well—superbly; everything has happened so delightfully," said she.

"But how is it, that Mr. and Mrs. Warren have honored us unexpectedly with a visit?"

"Ah!" laughed Louise—"ah! that is, or was intended to be, a profound secret. Papa manages so mysteriously. Yet at one time it got half out."

"I suppose it does not need much racking of the brains to find it out. A matrimonial affair, that's all. I am sleepy."

Louise was still disposed to talk another half hour; yet she slipped into her nest, and a kiss closed her sweet mouth and—

"I am very anxious for to-morrow to come," she muttered, half overcome with sleep. "Good night!"

CHAPTER XII.

THE TWO FRIENDS.

It was late the next morning when I rubbed my eyes open. Louise had left her rest, and was bounding over the mountains. I put on my morning-gown, and sat down, recalling the events of the preceding night. Strange! very strange!

Nathan, Vignerolles, and Emily! The latter I could not get out of my head. This vain girl—for vain she is with all her good sense—is evidently captivated with the count's titles, and his three hundred negroes. Well! it is her will; she does it too with her eyes open, and no one has a right to object. Fortunately he is a man of honor, possessed of immense wealth, and only one daughter. But—sixty years, or at least fifty-nine and a-half, on one side—and on the other eighteen! The difference is too great.

While I was revolving these thoughts in my mind, Louise slips in—her face a real bulletin of important news—with her little chambermaid at her heels.

"Oh, you late sleeper! all the house is in the drawing-room, the garden, or the park, and only you——"

"In my morning-gown."

"We must hasten. Every one congratulates—has already congratulated; the affair is agreed on."

"What's agreed on?"

"What's agreed on!" she cried, impatiently. "Why, the count has seriously asked for Miss Emily Warren; and his proposal has not only been accepted, but they are to be married this very afternoon. Father Hilaire from above, and Squire Turnip from below, have been sent for."

"Indeed! This is sudden—I might say a youthful, imprudent haste. This impatient desire!"

"But the affair has been a long time in progress—for more than half a year."

"What! more than half a year in progress? According to your account, Emily must have been coquetting with the count and Doughby at the same time."

"Not at all! she never coquetted with Doughby. All came from Mrs. Houston, who forced Emily to receive the attentions of Doughby. She never loved him, and determined, as soon as she should be out of reach of her aunt, to give Doughby to understand this in plain terms."

"Well, this is such a complicated affair! I really can comprehend nothing of it. But you must admit, my dear private-counselor, that Emily went too far. She accepted presents from Doughby."

"Only because she was compelled to it by Mrs. Houston. But hear the whole story. The aunt made her acquaintance in New-Orleans, at a ball given by Aunt M——y, at which Emily was present. The old baroness saw that she had made an impression on the count—and Julie and myself observing it also, rallied him on the matter, which he seemed to take quite seri-

ously. The baroness took occasion to give Emily a hint of the conquest she had made, and of course set off the good qualities of Papa Vignerolles in high relief, and still farther set before her the prospect of becoming one of the wealthiest and most distinguished ladies of the country. Nothing more occurred at that time."

"But this was sufficient, I suppose, to turn the brain of a prudish, half-frozen Yankee girl, who would, for money, have sold her heart's best blood."

"Not so; probably it may have confirmed her resolution to send Doughby a-packing at the first opportunity. But the count intended nothing of this kind."

"Intended nothing of this kind? Why then his advances?"

"His advances? Why, because the count—you know his *delicatesse*."

"Yes, his *delicatesse*! Away with his *delicatesse*, and *finesse*, of which he is master. A *cidevant*——"

"Hear me," interrupted Louise, impatiently. "The count, having learned of Doughby's attentions to Emily, conducted himself in the most delicate manner. In spite of all the persuasion of the baroness, he refused to pay any marked attention to Emily—although the Baroness M——y had hinted to him, that Emily was by no means indifferent to his society. But, with his usual delicacy, he said that he was too well aware that with his fifty-five years——"

"Fifty-nine and a-half, with your permission, madam."

"Do n't interrupt me, with your fifty-nine and a-half. Well, he was well aware, he said, that—with his fifty-nine years—to contend with Doughby would expose him to ridicule; therefore, he must entreat the Baroness M——y to take no further steps in his behalf. He refused absolutely, by his attentions, to restrain her freedom in the least; he even declared, that it was his desire to see her married to Doughby."

"Strange—unheard of magnanimity! Is it then true, that we are not living in the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty-eight? I am almost ready to believe, that we have made a back-leap to the time of King Arthur and his round-table."

"Ah! he is indeed a noble man—a prize, a pearl, George. But perhaps you are not aware of his going to the north, to drink the waters of Saratoga, two weeks after the departure of Mr. Warren and his daughter, in company with Doughby. Of course, he must have believed the wedding had already taken place; but when he reached Saratoga, he learned from Emily herself the turn which the affair had taken."

The count, during his abode at the Springs, was the admiration of all the northern ladies. His carriages were ever at their service. You know his princely revenue—almost a hundred thousand a year——”

“Yes, the carriages; that’s the principal thing!”

“He was so far satisfied with Emily, as now to make a proposition to her parents. But hear further, and judge with what delicacy he did it. He told them plainly of his intention to offer his hand to their daughter; but, in order to leave her entirely to her own free choice, and also in consideration of his age, and to avoid exposing himself to ridicule, he thought it proper to make the proposal to her parents.”

“Well, dear Louise, will you be so kind as to let me know when we shall reach the outlet of this over-delicate diplomatic labyrinth?”

Louise shook her little head impatiently, and continued: “He requested the women to make known his intentions to Emily, and to let him know the result, not in writing or by word, but by actions. He would cause one of the most distinguished ladies in New-Orleans, Mrs. Houston, to invite Emily back to her house. The acceptance of this invitation, he would regard as the acceptance of his proposals. Then he would formally ask Miss Warren for her hand. To further this end, he requested Mr. and Mrs. Warren to come down to Louisiana, and besides, Mr. Warren could also attend to some business there, which required his presence. The parents acceded to this proposition, and in fourteen days Emily received a very urgent invitation to re-visit Mrs. Houston, at her house; which, of course, was accepted.”

“The count attended, as winner of the game! This was the result, then? Not bad, that; though too much diplomacy in the game. These diplomatic tricks are seldom forerunners of a happy marriage, dear Louise. However, let us hope for the best.”

“To be sure, he is sixty—or I will say fifty-nine; yet he is a fine looking man, and his fortune——”

“All right; for Emily that may do very well—but, believe me——”

“What? of what are you thinking?”

“Ah! now I can understand many things, before inexplicable to me;—the mysterious allusion of papa’s at the time when I first made up to you, the day after our acquaintance.”

“What allusion?”

“Why, at the fifteen hundred mile journey, to see the beautiful Miss Warren,

and yet come too late! Well, I am content—I don’t envy him; I would not give what I’ve got for fifty Emilys. Is it not so, Louise? you would not, would you? and yet you seem to pique yourself on something.”

“Not at all. I congratulate Miss Warren on having found a husband, and a rich one too; for money has been the principal thing with her. Yet it has cost many a heart-ache, and many a mind has been disturbed; even papa——”

“He, too?”

“Indeed he; for, you know, when Doughby played us that horrible trick, Charles was——”

“All over in fire and flames—captivated.”

“Yes; it caused much trouble to papa; for a match with Adelaide had been agreed on for Charles, by Madame Lassalle and papa, who was then very angry——”

“And probably Charles had no thoughts, at that time, of introducing Miss Lacalle into the bridal chamber.”

“Right the reverse—they loved each other from childhood; but, for the last five years, he had lost sight of her—she, with Genevieve, having been in the convent at Paris, where she received an accomplished education. Their marriage takes place to-day also.”

“It goes on well; one peal of thunder after another.”

“That’s not yet all. Can’t you guess? Genevieve, too!”

“Genevieve?”

“This matter is settled, too—and, for that purpose, D’Ermonville came over. She will receive some property of the count’s in France—a part of that million falls to his share; the remainder goes to repair the estate of his family. The count reserves to himself whatever he has accumulated in Louisiana.”

“Well, this disposition of his fortune shows a very good and prudent man. I believe now, myself, that Emily will be happy with him. He is a man of honor, and his friendship for old Nathan is another proof of it.”

“Ah! Nathan! But do you know that this Nathan is a powerful and very rich man?”

“A powerful and rich man? The squatter regulator?”

“He is no longer a squatter. He is now the proprietor of several hundred thousand acres—a tract larger than any parish in Louisiana.”

“Proprietor by his own sovereignty—as long as the Mexicans do n’t eject him!”

"No; he has got a grant from the Mexican government for his land, which extends about sixty miles, both in length and breadth."

"Is it possible? How has he effected this?"

"Do you recollect the young Mexican, so reserved, whom you saw in our house when you first came to visit us? He was a Mexican general, forced to flee his country, at the time of the revolution preceding the last. He succeeded in escaping to Texas; but there his enemies overtook him, and would have slain him, but for the protection of Nathan—who retained him and his wife in his house for several weeks, and then sent him to the count, who introduced him to papa. Just on our wedding-day came the news, that a counter-revolution had placed his party at the head of the government, and so the same day he crossed the frontier on his way home. Several of the sons and grandsons of Nathan accompanied him into the interior of the Mexican territory; and, as a reward for this, Nathan, some weeks afterwards, received his grant."

While my dear little wife is relating all this, she becomes quite impatient under the hands of the chamber-maid. She twists and turns in all directions; yet, important a matter as the toilet is, the relation of this history is more so, and must be attended to before everything else.

"Halloo! Howard, roared a voice from without the door, "not yet ready to sail?"

"That's the word, Doughby!" I exclaimed.

"All is in great glee and glory, dear brother-in-law! Brides and bridegrooms in great plenty! Old Turnip is sent for! But come! all are inquiring for you."

"We come—we come, dear Doughby! One moment's patience!"

Finally the last pin is in Louise's dress, and away we go. The first one we meet is Amadée, in great glee, with a huge bunch of flowers in his bosom; then papa comes running up, crying, "Where are you, children? Be quick! breakfast will soon be ready."

Then comes Hauterouge, storming away—"Ah, dear Louise! beloved Howard! why don't you come?" and a dozen more swarmed past us toward the garden. In the garden glitter and rustle the bridal-dresses: D'Ermonville and Genevieve, Charles and Adelaide, the count and Emily, are close behind, and all around a lovely garden of flowers. Now we approach the piazza, where sounds the breakfast-bell.

I could not refrain from contemplating the group. Among them, old Nathan was prominent—like an aged oak amid a surrounding forest of trees, a venerable picture of inexhaustible strength and unsubdued energy. His leather-jacket and breeches, and linsey-woolsey coat, form a strong contrast with the elegant, lovely, fashionable dresses of the ladies tripping about him. In his iron-features—his mildly-shining eyes—and in his indescribably calm countenance, there was something so imposing, so venerable—it was the most complete personification of practical philosophy and self-education ever carried into effect. Now I could understand the strong attachment of the count to him. As I see him, hand in hand with his friend and Emily, the tender and consoling words of Coleridge ring in my ears:

"Hath he not always treasures, always friends,
The great good man? These treasures love, and light,
And calm the thoughts, regular as infants' breath?"

In silence I press the hand of the count; my look speaks more than words can tell. A disposition more serious than gay reigns among us, as with those who, after a long and stormy passage, finally reach their home, but slowly recover their wonted cheerfulness. Thus we silently entered the drawing-room and took our seats. After awhile Nathan slowly rose, in his hand a glass filled with Madeira. We looked at him with anxious expectation, when he began!

"Fellow-citizens, friends, and especially you my dear friend and colonel, and you my honored countryman and bride—allow me a few words, before giving my toast. Of eighty years of my life, fifty I have lived without knowing what it is to have a true friend—a friend, self-denying and faithful unto death. Yet I had friends in whom I have ever trusted, and who have never forsaken me. One was my Great Friend in Heaven—the other myself. These were my only true friends; and I did not calculate then I should ever have a third one. Yet there was a third one, who forced himself into my heart and soul, teaching me that which I had before believed could not be found on earth, that there was such a thing as true friendship. For the last thirty years I have known that friendship, of which I was ignorant the former fifty years of life, and when I die I will leave it as a legacy to my children. But I reckon a third one now steps between us, dear friend and colonel! Three times you were on the point of departing to the land of your birth, and three times you have yielded to my entreaties and re-

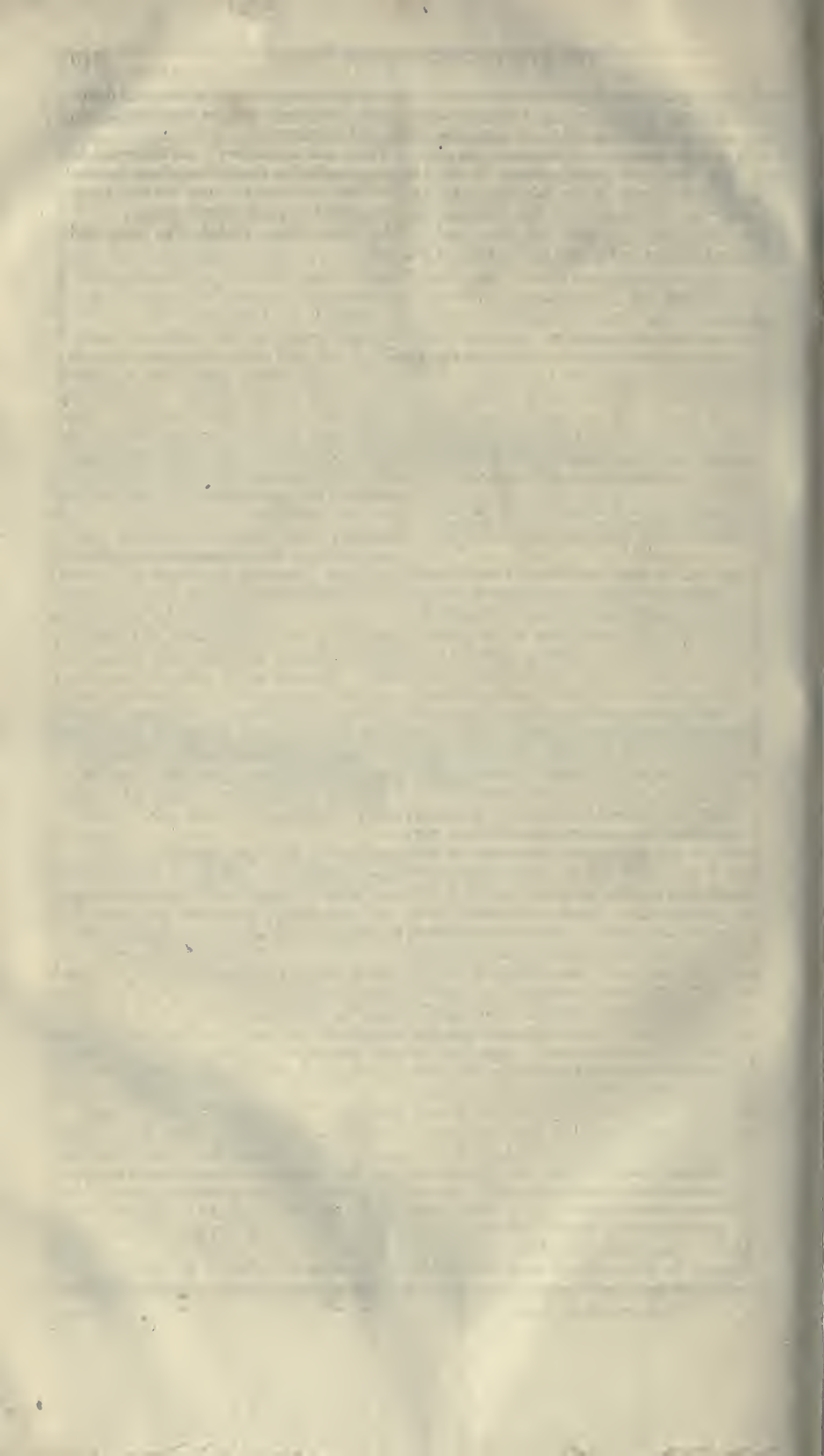
mained, an ornament of your adopted country. And now you, my dear countrywoman, are a third person who will keep this friend in our country. I beseech you to hold him fast—the loyal subject of his king, the ornament of his adopted country, and the mild master of his servants. I am sure you will hold him fast, and sweeten his days to the end of his life. I

now offer you my congratulations, and drink to your happiness, and to our friendship here and hereafter."

"Here and hereafter!" we all joined in chorus, touched to the bottom of our hearts, while the two friends, with tearful eyes, are entwined in each other's arms.

May these three friends live long and happily!

THE END.



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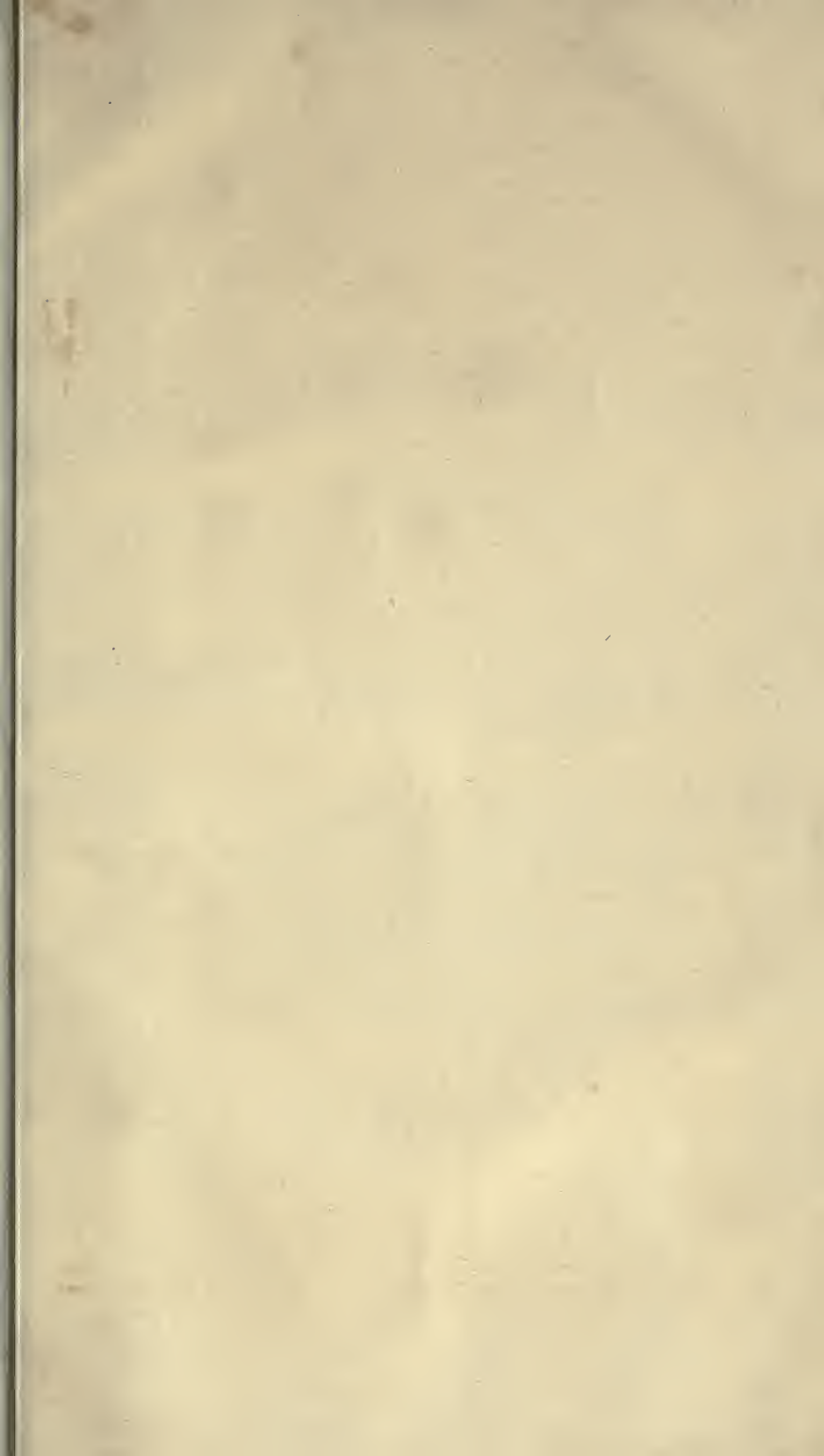
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